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Daily Report
Latin America

FBIS-LAT-94-146 *29 July 1994*

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Cuba

Minint 'Note' Reports Boat Hijacking

FL2907004994 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2356 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] An Interior Ministry [Minint] note reports that in the early hours of 26 July, four individuals hijacked the Baragua ferry which travels between Regla Municipality and Luz Port in Havana. Brandishing a Makarov pistol, an AKM rifle bayonet, and other knives, the hijackers forced their way onto the bridge right after the vessel had left the port in Regla with 30 people aboard, including the crew. They threatened the captain and ordered him to head toward the mouth of the bay, then they made the passengers lie on the floor and intimidated them by firing a shot, which did not injure anyone but showed the aggressiveness of the hijackers.

When a Polargo no. 2 tugboat from Havana's port was sent in pursuit, together with a Border Guard vessel, the hijackers threatened to kill a 17-year-old girl who was trying to stop them, threw two people overboard, one of them three miles offshore, and threatened to throw others overboard, according to the Minint note. The boat captain and a passenger managed to escape and jump overboard during the first minutes of the hijacking. The two people thrown overboard and the captain were rescued by the Border Guard, and the other passenger made it to shore on his own.

At 36 miles offshore, the boat was intercepted and boarded by the U.S. Coast Guard, which invited those wishing to go to the United States to climb aboard their vessel. A total of 15 people did. The U.S. Coast Guard gave the hijackers' weapons to those who insisted on returning to Cuba. On Tuesday night [26 July], the remaining 11 people on board returned to Havana's port on the Baragua vessel and, together with the four people, thrown overboard, have helped to reconstruct the events and are helping with the investigation. The actions of the crew of the U.S. Coast Guard vessel borders on cynicism, adds the Minint note.

Despite the message sent by our Border Guard at 0008 GMT, reporting the hijacking to the Miami Coast Guard, and despite having the evidence in their hands when they boarded the Cuban vessel, they welcomed the reckless people who, armed and threatening, endangered the lives of all the passengers aboard. This action shows the hypocrisy of the U.S. immigration policy regarding Cubans who wish to travel to the United States. In this manner, they encourage those who could care less about risk or the lives endangered by such adventures. These criminal actions are relentlessly fostered by the U.S. authorities. Thus ends the Minint note.

U.S. 'Support' Denounced

PA2907004594 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2245 GMT 28 Jul 94

[PRENSA LATINA headline: "Cuba-Kidnapping: U.S. Aid to Hijackers of Cuban Boat is Denounced"]

[Text] Havana, 28 Jul (PL)—Denouncing today the support U.S. Coast Guards had given to armed kidnappers of a Cuban boat, Cuba described as hypocritical the U.S. immigration policy for Cubans who want to travel to that country.

A note by the Cuban Interior Ministry reported on the 26 July hijacking by four individuals of a passenger boat transiting between Regla, a Havana municipality, and Muelle de Luz Dock, in the Bay of Havana. U.S. authorities were involved in how the escapade ended.

According to the note, to which PRENSA LATINA had access, the incident occurred when the hijackers used a Nakarov pistol, a bayonet from an AKN rifle, and knives to detour the boat after the boat weighed anchor with 30 people, including the boat's crew, on board.

The captain of the boat was threatened and forced to head toward the bay. The passengers were forced to lay on the floor and were intimidated by a fired shot, which injured no one but made evident the aggressiveness of the authors of the piracy, the note states.

The note reports once a Port of Havana tugboat and a Border Guard patrol boat began the chase, the hijackers threatened to kill a 17- year-old woman, threw two people overboard (one of them three miles from the coast), and threatened to throw the other passengers overboard as well.

When the fleeing group was 36 miles from the Cuban coast, it was intercepted and boarded by crew members of a U.S. Coast Guard vessel who, after inviting those who wanted to go to the United States to come on board the U.S. vessel, took in 15 individuals and gave the hijackers' weapons to those who insisted on returning to their country.

The conduct of the U.S. Coast Guard crew was cynical, the note states, explaining the Cuban Border Guard had sent a message to its counterpart in Miami, the United States, reporting on the particulars of the hijacking.

When the U.S. crew members boarded the Cuban boat, they held in their own hands the evidence, but they still welcomed the irresponsible people who at gun and knife point endangered the lives of all those on board the vessel.

The note condemns the encouragement U.S. authorities give to actions of this nature, which the note describes as criminal and states this incident is proof of the hypocrisy of the U.S. immigration policy for Cubans who want to travel to that country.

Eleven people returned to the Port of Havana on board the Baragua boat that same day, 26 July. They and the four individuals who were thrown into the sea (the captain and another person were able to escape by jumping into the sea) contributed their testimonies to the reconstruction of the incident, which is under investigation, the note states.

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A group of individuals stole a tugboat with more than 60 passengers in Havana on 13 July and tried to take it to the United States. Upon being intercepted by the crews of three other tugboats, the escape plans failed, but the seized tugboat sank, and more than 30 people disappeared in the sea.

Commentary Implicates U.S.

FL2907020694 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Commentary by Marina Menendez from the "Exclusive" program]

[Text] Yesterday on this program, I mentioned the folly of the U.S. Senate's suggestion to President Bill Clinton a few days ago, accusing the Cuban Government before the United States, taking advantage of the dreadful outcome of the incident involving the 13 de Marzo tugboat, which accidentally capsized, taking the lives of 32 Cubans.

I cautioned yesterday about the unthinkable consequences that such an unfair accusation, a clear act of aggression against Cuba, could unleash. I was, of course, speaking internationally.

Today, the Interior Ministry note reporting the act of piracy on what is popularly known as Regla's ferry, demonstrates the other side of the problem, the dangers that encouraging acts of this nature represent for those living here. This is nothing new. Two other incidents, which a few months ago took the lives of three young Border Guard soldiers in Tarara, as well as incidents that have repeatedly taken place at the fence artificially dividing the Cuban territory from the portion usurped by the Guantanamo Naval Base, prove the point.

This is why it is so worrisome that while encouraging illegal acts, U.S. authorities no longer limit themselves to welcoming as heroes those who leave Cuba illegally but peacefully. On this occasion, they also welcomed people who threatened to use force and who were very likely not going to hesitate in using it. I am not going to repeat, it has been said many times, that the extreme inflexibility in granting visas to Cubans who visit the U.S. Interests Section office in Havana, responds to Washington's political strategy to promote discontent and desperation among those who wish to leave, particularly at a time when Cuba in undergoing an evident crisis.

The law, which since 1966 has been giving immediate refugee status to Cubans arriving illegally in the United States, is part of that same strategy. However, to applaud those who endanger the lives of those who wish to remain in Cuba despite the current crisis, is going too far.

Prieto Says U.S. 'Hindering Legal Immigration'

FL2807164894 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 28 Jul 94

[From the "First Thing" program]

[Text] In Santiago, Chile, Abel Prieto, president of the National Union of Cuban Writers and Artists, has stated that the continuing and strengthened U.S. blockade of Cuba is evidence of the validity of the Revolution's economic and social project.

In a press conference that took place at the press club, Politburo member Prieto stressed the importance of the fact that Cuba is still on its feet despite the catastrophe that the loss of trade with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe meant.

Prieto, in response to a journalist's questions, broached the double standard that the U.S. Government has in systematically hindering legal immigration to the United States by granting, out of the 20,000 authorized, only a ridiculous amount of visas every year.

Prieto Comments on 26 July Celebration in Chile

FL2707135894 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Report by Orlando Contreras from Santiago, Chile; from the "Doing Radio" program]

[Text] [Contreras] In previous contacts I mentioned the central ceremony on the occasion of the 26 July anniversary here in Santiago de Chile. Most of you probably remember that Abel Prieto, president of the National Union of Cuban Writers and Artists [UNEAC], spoke at this ceremony, which virtually filled up the Chile Stadium. Abel Prieto was also introduced as a member of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] Politburo. Many strong feelings of solidarity with the Cuban people were expressed during the ceremony, where one could see many posters which read: Cuba's struggle is the struggle of America; People That Struggle Triumph; Cuba is the Example; and Chile is With You.

The meeting was a cultural ceremony in which Abel Prieto was the only speaker. At the end of this emotional day, we asked Comrade Prieto to express his feelings on the significance of the meeting. This is what he had to say:

[Begin recording] [Prieto] Well, I believe you and I and all the Cubans present at this meeting have coincided that the public's response was noticeable. The stadium filled up. Not only was it full, but the public reacted fervently before all the demonstrations of solidarity. There was great cooperation from Chilean artists who came voluntarily, summoned by the solidarity movement to work and make this activity great.

It was very significant for Cubans and Latin Americans that this date was chosen to emphasize the fact that in this world—which is truly manipulated from the communication standpoint, where mankind's most mediocre, individualist qualities are highlighted—there are so many generous people who are actively engaged in expressing solidarity with our fatherland. It was very satisfying and it was a very emotional moment, which

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had great impact. It was truly something that people expressed with much authenticity and passion. The Cuban cause forms part of these people's lives. This anniversary date forms part of the lives and personal experiences of those people who were present at this meeting. As revolutionary Cubans, this helps us to go on.

[Contreras] Abel if you had to synthesize your message to the Chilean people here at Chile Stadium, what would your message be.

[Prieto] Well, I tried to briefly explain Cuba's situation and explain the significance of our battle. The essential message was that they could trust in our people's capacity of resistance and work; that Cuba would not let down these solidarity movements; and that Cuba would not let down all these generous and beautiful people. One could tell that they are humble people, who do not have many resources and they donate what they can, which has great material and spiritual value. We wanted people to know that we are resisting and that they are helping us. It helps us spiritually to know that we are accompanied throughout our struggle. [end recording]

[Contreras] Friends, you have just heard Abel Prieto, president of the UNEAC at the conclusion of the ceremony in Chile on the occasion of the 41st anniversary of the assault on the Moncada Barracks, which became a true expression of solidarity with the Cuban people. I reiterate, there were many posters with slogans of encouragement for the Cuban people. Several Chilean artists were present and participated in the meeting. The meeting was held at the Chile stadium which was completely full. It is the same stadium where on 12 September 1973 Victor Jara was murdered.

Abel Prieto has a news conference scheduled for today as well as meetings with intellectuals and Chilean writers, television appearances, and more interviews with the local media.

[Radio Rebelde in Spanish at 0900 GMT on 27 July adds: "In Santiago de Chile, UNEAC president Abel Prieto stated that the measures being implemented in Cuba are aimed at protecting the lower income sectors."]

Prieto Meets With Socialist Party Officials in Chile

FL2807194094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] In Santiago de Chile, Cuban intellectual and politician Abel Prieto held a meeting with (Camilo Escalona) and (Gonzalo Marner), respectively the president and the secretary general of the Socialist Party of Chile. The socialist party, the second largest political movement of the government coalition in that South American nation, condemns the U.S. blockade against Cuba and promotes the restoration of full diplomatic ties between Santiago de Chile and Havana.

In their interview with the president of the National Union of Cuban Writers and Artists, the socialist leaders reiterated their positions and expressed their solidarity with the Cuban people under the current circumstances.

Fernandez Meets With Ecuadoran Solidarity Groups

FL2807193894 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Today, Cuban Vice President Jose Ramon Fernandez reiterated Cuba's position to continue strengthening its society's socialist project despite the strong blockade imposed by the United States.

During a meeting with Ecuadoran solidarity groups, Fernandez stressed that, despite Cuba's difficult economic situation, the social system chosen by the Cubans more than 34 years ago will remain unaltered in spite of the negative predictions by enemies of the revolution. He pointed out that Cuba's greatest enemy is the economic, trade, and financial blockade imposed by the United States which has been condemned by most members of the United Nations and Latin American peoples.

Robaina, Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Hold Talks

FL2807184194 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Official talks have begun between Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina and Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Diego Paredes Pena at the Foreign Ministry offices. At the closed-door meeting Minister Paredes asked his counterpart Robaina Gonzalez details on the economic changes that Havana has been implementing over the past few years.

Furthermore, Radio Rebelde has learned from reliable sources that the Ecuadoran foreign minister was interested in the development of biotechnology in our country and the real possibilities of mutual cooperation in the area of the cultivation of plantains, among other agricultural spheres.

According to witnesses, the conversations between Roberto Robaina and Diego Paredes have reinforced the two countries' interest in taking firm and practical steps of mutual benefit for the governments of Quito and Havana.

Afterwards, the Ecuadoran foreign minister was received at the seat of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP] by its president, Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, and at this moment he is meeting with Cuban Minister of Foreign Trade Ricardo Cabrisas in his office.

According to experts this meeting with Minister Cabrisas is decisive for the future accords to be signed here in Havana. Ecuador could supply Cuba with rice and beans and other grains. In exchange for these products, Cuba

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would compensate these imports through the sale of biopharmaceutical products.

Further on Visit

PA2907002194 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1834 GMT 28 Jul 94

[By Silvio J. Mendiandua]

[Text] Havana, 28 Jul (PL)—Official sources have said the continuation of fluid dialogue between Cuba and Ecuador creates an adequate framework to encourage and diversify political, economic, and cooperation relations between the two countries.

Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina and Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Diego Paredes agreed with this assessment. Paredes is on a three-day visit to Cuba, and a broad analysis on bilateral relations will be made during this visit.

Discussions between Cuban President Fidel Castro and his Ecuadoran counterpart, Sixto Duran-Ballen, at the Ibero-American Summit, is an example of how there can be understanding and channels of cooperation between our two countries, Robaina said before meeting with Paredes today.

The head of Cuban diplomacy assured Paredes' visit is noteworthy, because it will broaden dialogue and intensify economic and technical-scientific exchange, as well as other aspects of bilateral interest.

Robaina underscored the possibility of broadening cooperation in tourism and increasing existing cooperation in health, sports, and any other field in which practical agreements can be reached.

Likewise, Paredes, making the first official visit by an Ecuadoran foreign minister since diplomatic relations were reestablished in 1979, said that the historic ties of friendship between Cuba and Ecuador are thriving and that conditions are right for these links to increase in all fields.

Afterward, during a meeting with Ricardo Cabrisas, Cuban foreign trade minister, a possible increase in trade between both countries through increased Cuban exports was broached.

Cabrisas offered Paredes the sale of Cuban pharmaceutical products as a way to increase bilateral trade and the use of an existing agreement on banking credit. In exchange, Ecuador could export rice, beans, and other agricultural and cattle products, according to what was learned.

Cuba and Ecuador are to explore ways to reach agreements in tourism as well as the participation of Ecuadoran businessmen in the opening to foreign investment taking place in Cuba.

Paredes is to meet with Osmany Cienfuegos, Cuban tourism minister, today and will visit scientific, agricultural, and cattle development centers before returning to Ecuador on 30 July.

Havana 'Anxiously Awaiting' Arrival of Lazo

FL2807161794 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Report by correspondent Carlos Sanabria Marrero in Santiago de Cuba; from the "Doing Radio" program]

[Text] [Sanabria] A vigorous group of the party and mass organization officials and outstanding workers from the municipalities of Marianao, Guanabacoa, and Arroyo Naranjo have been touring Santiago de Cuba Province for the past few days. I will now play a conversation that I held with one of the comrades, who forms part of that delegation from Havana City.

[Begin recording] [Delegate Digna Melendez Carvajal] My name is Digna Melendez Carvajal.

[Sanabria] From what part of Havana are you?

[Melendez] Well, I am from Guanabacoa Municipality and I represent the Federation of Cuban Women [FMC]. I am the secretary general of the FMC in that municipality.

[Sanabria] Do not tell me you have already come to get [Politburo member Esteban] Lazo!

[Melendez] No, we planned this visit before Comrade Lazo was elected by the party's provincial committee in Havana City as its first secretary. This has been a great experience for us because our trip to this heroic city has been an emotional one since we have met with Lazo. We have had the privilege of being the first leaders from Havana City to meet with him. We have been able to witness how the people of Santiago de Cuba love Lazo.

[Sanabria] Lazo has received much support from the city and province of Santiago de Cuba. He will also need much from you in Havana City.

[Melendez] Well, we think we will be Lazo's ambassadors in Havana City. We are capable of this and it will be one of the first tasks that we will undertake when we return to the capital. The people of the capital have been anxiously awaiting Lazo's arrival from the very first moment. As a matter of fact we have a first secretary, Comrade [Jorge] Lezcano, who was released from his post with much honor for his work in Havana City and who is loved by the people of the capital.

As soon as Lazo was released from his position in Santiago de Cuba, everyone in Havana was saying: Lazo is coming here to Havana. Our people are very clever and perceptive and they always know what is going on. Everyone is awaiting his arrival. We will go back and tell everyone of all the work he has done here in Santiago and all that he has achieved with the people here in

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Santiago and we will tell everyone of Lazo's farewell here. Everyone wants to bid him farewell. Everyone wants to embrace him. Everyone wants to give him homage. This indicates that everyone loves him. Furthermore, on the evening of 25 July we saw Lazo with the people of Santiago de Cuba. Lazo was walking at the front and the people followed him. [end recording]

[Sanabria] That was Digna Melendez Carvajal, secretary general of the FMC in Guanabacoa Municipality, who forms part of the Havana delegation that is visiting Santiago de Cuba on the occasion of the festivities marking the 41st anniversary of the assault on the Moncada Barracks.

'Hard Work' Solution to Loss of Peso Value

FL2807150094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 28 Jul 94

["Our Opinion" commentary by Ariel Larramendi Villafane; from the "Doing Radio" program]

[Text] [Word indistinct] it is interesting to reflect on the phenomena that occur on a daily basis in our country during the special period's difficult and unfortunate situation. Such is the case of the devaluation of what we could call the worker's salary in Cuba. Let us take, for example, someone whose monthly income is 200 pesos. I recently read a report from a foreign press agency in which they used this figure and in parenthesis added: $2 on the black market exchange or in the underground economy.

To any reader outside of our country, as a matter of fact, to any inhabitant of the slums [favelas] or the shantytowns [villa miserias] from any country of this continent, knowing the buying power of $2 in their respective point of view, this information might give the impression that in Cuba people are eating one another.

I do not wish to justify or fool anyone. We all know that, currently, there are approximately 11 billion pesos of surplus currency in the hands of the population as the corresponding counterweight of products and services. We also know that the fringe market or the black market is established on the laws of supply and demand and that under current conditions, there being much demand and little supply, this market becomes vicious. In this sphere of the marginal economy uncontrollable inflation is difficult to estimate when two currencies are used simultaneously.

However, these foreign press agencies forget to make the same reduction in the sphere of the state's supply of goods and services to the population, which as everyone knows is insufficient. If we were to convert the expenses incurred by the state in proportion to these foreign press agencies' reduced salaries, we would see that the family basket would cost no more than a few cents. Rent for a home—let us say it is 40 pesos—after such a reduction would be only 40 cents. In addition to all this are the other free services such as health care or education, which should not be ignored even if they have been mentioned many times. I am sure the Latin American masses, who may have heard this news, have to pay very much for those services in their respective countries.

The bad thing is that some of these fallacies by some foreign press agencies have an effect on some people here, who victimize themselves by reducing their income to dollars but who forget to do the same with their expenses.

To avoid making these reflections anymore complex, I have not mentioned the hard currency that the state has to pay for many of the products we consume, which we pay in pesos.

Let us not fool ourselves. Our peso has been devalued and it has also lost its ability as an incentive to work. The solution is to increase its value and buying power through hard work. It is a matter of survival. It is that simple.

ANPP's Alarcon on Nation's Situation, U.S. Role

PA2807172394 Caracas EL GLOBO in Spanish 23 Jul 94 p 8

[Report by Nelson Rodriguez]

[Text] The situation that the island of Cuba is currently facing cannot be analyzed without taking into account a very important historical assumption: the United States has always wanted to incorporate Cuba into its territory, ever since the 19th century.

This statement was the starting point of a conversation between EL GLOBO and Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the Cuban National Assembly of the People's Government, held within the framework of the Second Latin American Parliament Special Commissions Meeting, attended by delegations from 22 countries.

We first asked the high-ranking Cuban Parliament official and former foreign relations minister about his country's perception of the solidarity it is receiving during perhaps the most difficult phase of the so-called special period. We were talking about the support recently expressed by the governments of, among others, Canada, Brazil, and Mexico for the Fidel Castro government.

Alarcon de Quesada replied that this type of solidarity is vital for Cubans, adding: First, we must understand we are talking about a Latin American country that has been subject to a policy of harassment and blockade by the United States for more than 30 years. He pointed out what we are dealing with here is the right of a small country to choose its own fate versus the determination of a large imperial power that has always tried to impose its rules on Latin America, especially on this Caribbean subregion.

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Second, to corroborate his statements, the interviewee recalled historical events he believes are essential to understanding the dramatic situation his country is experiencing.

The Cuban official said: If we analyze Cuban history, we would see that since the beginning of the 19th century, before the first Bolivarian movements began organizing on the island in 1805, the United States, through its president at the time, made some official statements aiming at incorporating Cuba into U.S. territory. This is why the United States throughout the 19th century tried to prevent the victory of the Cuban people's independence movements.

Alarcon de Quesada maintained that the island's conditions failed to favor the independence movements of the time, because the United States knew how to interfere in any movement organized by patriotic Cubans in exile by seizing the vessels that carried the resources (money, weapons, others) they had collected, thereby obstructing the attempts at emancipation.

The thought was that Cuba would remain as a Spanish colony "until it would fall into U.S. hands as a ripe fruit," as the U.S. secretary of state of the time said, underscored Alarcon de Quesada, adding that as a corollary, we can say that the great Cuban effort, regardless of how much it is distorted, is nothing more that the fight of people for their true national independence, which U.S. hegemony has threatened since the beginning.

In response to a question, Alarcon de Quesada said: Should Cuban efforts fail, we would be returning to the 19th century; in other words, not only Cuban sovereignty would be harmed, the sovereignty of each and every Latin American country would be too.

He also said: We are facing a country that is trying to maintain its own truly national social plan, which is very important for many people in [words indistinct].

Forced Neoliberalism

We talked about the neoliberalism that is being recommended as a recipe for overcoming the economic and social crisis in today's world. The president of the Cuban Parliament, after sipping his coffee, said: There is an intention afoot to impose neoliberalism throughout the world, unrestrained capitalism opposite a state that remains idle, opposite a government that operates only as a witness that merely looks on as market laws operate of their own accord, makes the poor much poorer and the rich much richer.

"In our case, we cling to preserving a social strategy of justice, of human solidarity. Cuba today is being seriously hammered; in one single blow it lost all its trading partners, its sources of credit, and external financing. However, it is interesting to note that it has been five years since the European socialist community disappeared, and Cuba is still dealing with its problems. Yet it continues to be one of the only places in the world where education is universal and free, as is public health. The social security system guarantees protection to every citizen despite the tremendous economic crisis. This is evidence that the idea of a society that is solidary is far superior to that of neoliberal capitalism."

International Support

We commented that the support Cuba is receiving is a matter that attracts attention, because it represents an interesting overture by governments that may have perceived that the Cuban project is a test that should come to its conclusion.

Alarcon de Quesada stated that his people know how to value this type of support and respect. This is an indication that there is a growing feeling of rejection extending throughout the world against U.S. policy toward Cuba. Especially if we consider that there is no more East-West confrontation, no Cold War, and that there is a more favorable international climate for peace and understanding. Thus, there is no explanation whatsoever for maintaining a policy of hostility against a nation, starting from specific concepts used by the United States as an excuse.

"It is so contradictory; while the U.S. Government steps up the blockade with the Torricelli Law and other actions, at the same time it grants China—that is also a socialist nation with which it has great differences—most favored nation status. Likewise, it resumes relations with Vietnam, lifting economic sanctions enforced over a long period. This, despite the fact that these are two socialist nations with which the United States has been at war, wars that killed thousands of U.S. people. In Cuba's case, what exists is an imperial aspiration that we mentioned at the beginning. Throughout its history, the United States has never contemplated annexing China or Vietnam, but ever since the beginning, the 13 U.S. colonies regarded Cuba as their extension. What they achieved with Puerto Rico has been their historic goal with regard to Cuba..."

We discussed many domestic and foreign policy issues with Alarcon de Quesada; however, we only had time left to comment on the Haitian case. The former foreign relations minister said invading that small island would be an error. There is no solution in sight to the Haitian case. The only solution is to help the Haitian people get rid of those who oppress them, he noted.

Alarcon Assesses Parlatino Meeting

PA2807211594 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 26 Jul 94

[Report by Julio Gomez; from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[Text] Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government and a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, has just returned from

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the Latin American Parliament [Parlatino] meeting in Caracas, Venezuela. Alarcon de Quesada assessed the meeting:

[Begin Alarcon recording] Three Parlatino commissions, the Women's Commission, the Social Debt Commission, and the Judicial Commission, attended the board of directors meeting in Caracas. A resolution condemning the U.S. blockade against Cuba was the most important decision the board of directors approved. Parlatino specifically expressed its support for the resolutions approved by the UN General Assembly and urged Latin American countries to back these resolutions.

Parlatino also accepted our invitation to hold its next meeting in Cuba, an acceptance which can certainly be viewed as proof of Parlatino's solidarity with Cuba. The commissions that met in Caracas, the Social Debt and Judicial commissions, will hold their next meetings in Havana; these meetings might be slated for November, when the Parlatino Health Commission, presided over by Cuba, is scheduled to meet here. [Words indistinct]

I believe the decision to hold a meeting before the Miami hemispheric summit takes place constituted another breakthrough. This meeting will be held for Latin American parliaments to discuss and devise a common position vis-a-vis the summit.

The Parlatino meeting was truly useful. We discussed numerous issues, many of which were significant for Cuba. In addition, Parlatino rejected interventionist plans in Haiti. [end recording]

Argentine Daily Interviews Abel Prieto

PY2707203894 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 24 Jul 94 p 36

[Interview with Abel Prieto, Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee Politburo member, by Sergio Ciancaglini in Buenos Aires; date not given]

[Text] [Ciancaglini] The news is indicating that the Cuban people are greatly dissatisfied with the current situation.

[Prieto] It is true, there is an undisputable irritation. Daily life is very harsh. There are problems with transportation, with food, with distribution, and with the blackouts, lasting hours, that deeply irritate the people. Electricity reaches 97 percent of the country, but that advantage has now been turned against us, as we had gotten used to living with light and now must go around in darkness. But there is a sacred distance between this irritation and an opposition to the revolution.

[Ciancaglini] But is there a political crisis?

[Prieto] No, and we had an example in 1993 during the elections for the National Assembly of the People's Government. Blank votes, annulled votes, and those not voting did not add up to 9 percent of the total. More than 90 percent voted in favor. That election had the value of a referendum.

[Ciancaglini] But there were single candidacies, which is contrary to the general characteristics of the democratic model.

[Prieto] The first thing is that we do not have a political crisis. People complain about their standard of living without questioning revolution's principles. Besides, we believe our scheme is democratic. Can anyone be a candidate, or reach the media in the United States? Cuba has workers committees, people's councils, and everyone participates in discussions seeking solutions to problems. Everything is done with the people's participation: health campaigns, illiteracy campaigns. That is democratic.

[Ciancaglini] A similar reasoning applied to East European regimes, which ended up falling.

[Prieto] The bureaucracy and paralysis that affected those countries is not seen in Cuba. People were fond of Gorbachev. It was thought that the opening would improve socialism, not destroy it. Cubans see how eastern Europeans live today and understand that it is better to improve within the boundaries of the revolution. There are other closer experiences, such as Nicaragua and Panama, not to speak of Haiti: children dying of hunger, parasites, tuberculosis. These things no longer exist in Cuba.

[Ciancaglini] But Cuba is attempting an opening.

[Prieto] Cuba has suffered the effects of an atomic bomb against its economy. On one hand we have the unfair blockade imposed by the Americans, who even prevent us from closing contracts with European companies attempting to provide equipment for the handicapped, because part of that equipment is made in the United States. We are forced to purchase insulin in Europe at three times the price in America. Another factor affecting us is the 85 percent drop in our foreign trade, which was conducted mainly with eastern European countries. In 1989 we imported for a total of $8.2 billion. Today our imports total only $2 billion. This is why our country is changing. We encourage foreign investment, self-employment (although we subsidize the unemployed), and we opened a dialogue with the Cuban community in Miami so they can travel and contact their relatives. Those who are not fascists are not our enemies.

[Ciancaglini] When we ask for more freedom, Cubans ask for less blockade. Doesn't that sound like an excuse?

[Prieto] No. The blockade is a reality and a cruelty. We are being punished because we continue to believe in an idea of emancipation and progress. It is not true that Cuban society is a homogeneous group marching under the vigilant eyes of the political police, either. I admit we can improve our system a lot to reflect the enormous

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plurality of our society. We must progress in that pluralism. If our model is a failure, as some people say, we ask them to let us fail and collapse with our idea, but on equal conditions with other countries.

Osmany Cienfuegos Discusses New Cayo Coco Airstrip

FL2807021394 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Report by correspondent Ruben Pino; from the "NTV" newscast]

[Text] To reach Cayo Coco by air is no longer a dream of many. The opening of a new airstrip will make it easier to access this tourism hub in the northern part of Camaguey Province with small and medium-sized planes.

Overflying the hundreds of kilometers of causeways connecting Camaguey and Ciego de Avila with its northern keys provides a more exact glimpse of everything that has been done to improve access to these keys.

The new airstrip, built in approximately nine months by workers of El Vaquerito contingent, the Union of Caribbean Construction Enterprises, Ciego de Avila's (ECI) no. 1, and investors from the national air service enterprise, will make it possible for Aerotaxi flights to begin serving the area.

Division General Rogelio Acevedo, president of the Civil Aeronautics Institute, explained the goal of the project.

[Begin recording] [Acevedo] The goal is to make the area more accessible for medium and small-sized planes, to bring tourists to the keys and other spots such as Varadero, Trinidad, Santiago de Cuba and to make it easier for the tourists to move around. [end recording]

The airstrip is halfway—20 miles each way—between the Guitart-Cayo Coco Hotel and Cayo Guillermo. Its location offers many advantages.

[Begin recording] [Osmany Cienguegos, identified by caption] It is an isolated spot outside the mainland. This makes it possible for other places near Cuba to bring visitors for one-day trips or longer stays.

[Pino] Aerotaxi is by far the most appropriate airline to bring tourists. What other types of aircraft could land here?

[Cienfuegos] That would be one of them. Any other Cuban or foreign aircraft, given that the airstrip is 1,400 meters long, can make the trip. [end recording]

As you can see, from now on, a FOKKER or an AN-2 airtaxi can bring this tourism destination closer.

Guantanamo Official Reviews Contingent's Achievements

FL2807021594 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Interview with Luis Pacheco Alvarez, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, ANPP, in Guantanamo Province by Diosdado Maso; from the "Exclusive" program]

[Text] [Maso] Guantanamo Province has been congratulated on various occasions in recent days, mainly due to its achievements in the agriculture sector. Raul Castro personally referred to those results yesterday, in his Isle of Youth address. That is why I am talking this evening with Luis Pacheco Alvarez, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP] in Guantanamo Province. It is said that the Communist activists' contingent is one of the contingents that has been most cooperative, so you could achieve those results in the agriculture sector. Why the Communists?

[Pacheco] For three reasons: One, because Communist activists in Guantanamo wanted to set an example after the Politburo's visit. Two, because we not only needed their arms; we also wanted the Communists' intelligence, awareness, and determination to change the valley of Guantanamo. Three, we wanted to establish the conditions that allow us to form the agriculture workers of the future, the young people we prepare today in agrarian polytechnic institutes.

[Maso] Does this mean the contingent has been a forge for the province's political cadres?

[Pacheco] Maso, I would say the contingent has been the forge for many things. So far as the people of Guantanamo are concerned, it has been the forge for their determination, decisiveness, awareness, consolidation, and use of intelligence. In sum, it has been a forge for revolutionaries and for Communist work. Anything is possible after that, including the cadres.

[Maso] Speaking of agricultural issues, people in Guantanamo will obviously begin to refer to things as occuring before and after the contingent.

[Pacheco] Evidently, Maso. Guantanamo's agriculture sector has changed a lot since the contingent. Let me tell you, not only has the valley of Guantanamo changed; in fact, the influence exerted by the valley of Guantanamo has spread to every agricultural sector in the province. A process has been launched to recover discipline in the labor sector. Let me assure you that the contingent works 10 hours a day and 26 days a month. This may sound simple, but the task is not easy in a valley like ours, where the temperature is always above 93 degrees Fahrenheit. I must also tell you that the goal established by contingent members has been met by more than half of them—1,500 of the 2,300 men were able to work 26 days a month 10 hours a day.

An intensive training program has begun. It is closely related to the technology needed for each of the crops. This, plus the demands dealing with the implementation of that technology, allowed the transformation of our agriculture. A serious process has been carried out to strengthen our men's ties with the area so that each worker may have his job and each chief is responsible for

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a specific program within the great task we all have. A program was developed for discussions and quality control in each activity—very little time is dedicated to the quality of agricultural matters. We have also dedicated some time to launching a program to evaluate the harvest. This way we will have a file on each harvest, which will allow us to evaluate all the positive and negative things that occur during the harvest—so they may be used as examples in other harvests.

[Maso] Do you agree with the viewpoint that the contingent strengthened the prestige of the party and the Union of Young Communists here in Guantanamo?

[Pacheco] I would say it did more than that, Maso. I believe the contingent strengthened the people's determination to struggle in Guantanamo; and it has been the best example that things can be done in Guantanamo.

[Maso] Undoubtedly, things can be done in Guantanamo, and this is being prove by the province's agricultural workers.

Haiti

U.S. Invasion Plan Generates Objections in UN

FL2807221394 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Excerpt] The U.S. resolution to obtain authorization by the United Nations for a nearly unilateral U.S. military intervention in Haiti gave rise to many objections among other members of the UN Security Council, diplomatic sources pointed out on 27 July. These reservations make the plan's adoption virtually impossible at this time, contrary to the wishes of U.S. Representative to the United Nations Madeleine Albright. Sources reported at the end of an in camera consultation meeting by the council that the text presented by the United States provides for the creation of a multinational force that could use all necessary means including military force to influence restoration of the legitimate authorities in Haiti and to establish a safe, stable environment.

This rather vague definition of the mandate would give Washington the necessary space to maneuver to define the modes of intervention as well as a starting date, these diplomats assert. [passage omitted]

Parlatino Seeks Resignations of Aristide, Cedras

FL2807233594 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] According to an INTERBRAS Service dispatch from Caracas quoted by LE NOUVELLISTE, the Latin American Parliament [Parlatino], on 23 July, asked President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to resign his post to facilitate a peaceful resolution to the Haitian crisis. Likewise, adds the newspaper, the Latin American paper asked General Raoul Cedras to step down as well so the United States does not have to militarily intervene in Haiti.

This proposal was made by the Parlatino president, Venezuelan Sociodemocratic Senator Humberto Celi, during a meeting in Caracas of the 18 Latin American and Caribbean Parliament representatives. Furthermore, asserts the Venezuelan senator, Parlatino solicits the resignation of President Aristide to facilitate the holding of new elections in Haiti. Cuban National Assembly president Ricardo Alarcon, who was participating in this meeting, stated that an invasion of Haiti would be a grave error.

MODELH-PRDH, CONACOM Will Abstain From Elections

FL2907002694 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Excerpts] Elections will soon be held in Haiti. The Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Haiti-Democratic Revolutionary Party of Haiti [MODELH-PRDH] of attorney Francois Latortue challenges everything that is marred by irregularities. MODELH-PRDH still abides by the law and nothing illegal has any solidity, said the president of MODELH on the phone.

The Permanent Electoral Council [CEP], formerly the Exceptional Electoral Council, announced consultations with the political parties for the holding of elections in the country soon, the only solution to the Haitian crisis, according to a recent statement by provisional President Emile Jonassaint. MODELH certainly hopes for a change in the crisis, but not at any cost. The decision has already been made. MODELH has imposed its model and—as a responsible party—will abstain. [passage omitted]

The National Congress of Democratic Movements [CONACOM] does not have a contradictory opinion. The CONACOM leader, Professor Victor Benoit, does not wish to participate in these elections, which will not be held in an equitable manner. Among the reasons for his condemnation of the elections, Prof. Benoit cites the illegality of the CEP, which in his opinion, is controlled from a distance by the Jonassaint government. The CONACOM leader first advocates the restoration of constitutional order to the country so that these elections can unfold in a credible manner.

[Begin recordintg, in Creole] [Benoit] I am very surprised to see that people who do not respect the Constitution, and who agreed to be members of an exceptional CEP that gave us the contested 18 January [1993] elections, are talking today about constitutional deadlines. I think there is a political maneuver in that matter. The Haitian people must be aware of it. People are putting forward the notion of constitutional deadlines so they can best violate the Constitution.

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[Unidentified correspondent] But why does CONACOM reject these elections?

[Benoit] Well, there are constitutional reasons as well as political reasons. We will remind everybody that this exceptional CEP is not provided for by the Constitution. Second, the procedure provided for by the 1987 Constitution for the formation of the CEP was not respected. [end recording]

PANPRA, MIDH Will Not Participate in Elections

FL2807220694 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1600 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Excerpt] A source close to PANPRA [Nationalistic Progressive Revolutionary Party of Haiti], led by Serge Gilles, told us yesterday that the party does not intend to be part of the elections. According to the party's source, this decision by PANPRA is motivated by the unconstitutional character of the current government and by the lack of representativeness on the electoral council.

MIDH [Movement For the Establishment of Democracy in Haiti] will also abstain from the electoral competition. MIDH legislator, Antoine Joseph, former president of the Chamber of Deputies, asserts that the party believes the atmosphere is not favorable for holding elections. Deputy Antoine Joseph maintains that the MIDH position is to continue seeking a negotiated solution to the crisis. [passage omitted]

MDN's DeRonceray Says He Will Run for President

FL2807220494 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1600 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Excerpt] The electoral preparations have begun. Parties such as MDN [Mobilization For National Development] and RDNP [Assembly of Progressive National Democrats] could take part in the ballot announced by the Permanent Electoral Council for the first week of November. MDN will take part in the elections. The party believes that elections remain the royal path to the democratic process, and a constitutional imperative.

For MDN leader, Hubert De Ronceray, elections are the only way out of the Haitian crisis. De Ronceray insists that Haiti be led by new people who can involve the country on an international level. Hubert De Ronceray asserts that he will represent his party, MDN, in the presidential elections and notes that MDN will work to win the ballot. The MDN leader also explains that elections are possible despite the country's socioeconomic and political problems.

Regarding the legitimacy of the electoral council, De Ronceray desires the resignation of three members of the council: Bernadotte Larosiliere, Ulrick Desire, and Joseph Apollon. These members of the council, according to De Ronceray, were imposed by the Haitian parliament. [passage omitted]

Anti-Occupation March, Other Activities Planned

FL2807212094 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] An anti-invasion demonstration is scheduled for today, 28 July. The Civic Initiative and Action Group intends to mark the 79th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Haiti with a march in Port-au-Prince. The organization has also planned a series of demonstrations that include the signing of a golden book against foreign occupation and the laying of the cornerstone for a monument in memory of Pierre Sully, a Haitian soldier killed during the U.S. occupation in 1915. Resignac Ansy-Rose has more details:

[Begin recording] Haiti will resist. This is the slogan being promoted for this 28 July commemorative march. In a document entitled, Manifesto of Haitian National Dignity, the organizers of the demonstration swear to oppose the intervention in each town, each village, each street, and each yard. We will resist any attempts to violate our people's rights to self-determination whatever the form or pretext, says the manifesto. The leaders of the Group for Civic Initiatives severely criticizes foreign interference in Haiti, an interference, according to them, which is supported by national collaborators, and which creates the conditions of Somalia and Liberia in Haiti.

The Group for Civic Initiatives denounced the confessed purpose of the foreign intervention in Haiti as an attempt to return a president ousted for violent, antidemocratic practices, disrespect for the Constitution and the laws of Haiti. The 28 July demonstration should mark the starting point of the new Haitian resistance, with the theme: No, never! Nevermore! The Group for Civic Initiatives and Actions has proposed a series of activities planned for a huge rally at the Oxide Jeanty Kiosk. Before this rally, scheduled for 1900 GMT this afternoon, an open-air mass will be celebrated. Following the mass, the provisional president of the Republic, Judge Emile Jonassaint, and Army chief, General Raoul Cedras, are due to sign a gold book including the position of the Haitian people, according to the organizers. Judge Emile Jonassaint will make a televised address preceeding the laying of the cornerstone of a monument bearing a likeness of Pierre Sully, a Haitian soldier killed during the U.S. occupation of the Republic of Haiti. [end recording]

Groups Mark 79th Anniversary of U.S. 'Occupation'

PA2907025294 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2349 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Port-au-Prince, 28 Jul (EFE)—With coupist General Raul Cedras and de facto President Emile Jonassaint absent, groups linked to the military government

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participated today in a march commemorating the 79th anniversary of the U.S. occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934. The groups concurrently published a "manifesto of national dignity" against a possible military intervention in Haiti by the United States and the international community.

National Television Director Emmanuel Menard, a defender of the coup d'etat against Haitian constitutional President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on 30 September 1991, read the manifesto.

Between 200 and 300 people marched in front of the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince to display their opposition to Aristide's possible return and their support for the holding of new general elections.

U.S. Marines were posted on the roof of the U.S. Embassy, from where they watched the marchers demonstrate.

U.S. Embassy officials were also seen observing the march with binoculars from the roof.

Near the U.S. Embassy, demonstrators saw CNN journalist Peter Arnett and began insulting him.

Although it had been announced Cedras and Jonassaint would be present, the de facto government leaders did not show up at the Park of the Haitian Independence Leaders, where the demonstration ended.

The "de facto" government reiterated it will "never again" permit another invasion, in light of U.S. threats of occupation.

Priest Antoine Adrien, former president of Aristide's Presidential Commission, described as "indecent" the march called by defenders of the de facto government.

Adrien rejected a possible military intervention but challenged the government to permit pro-democracy groups to stage their own demonstration, "for two hours at least."

According to sources close to the government, 1.75 million gourdes ($117,000) were invested in the demonstration, which did not assemble more than 1,000 people.

Supporters of the coup that overthrew Aristide have not managed since 30 September 1991 to obtain more than 3,000 people to participate in demonstrations organized against the return of constitutional order.

Dominican Republic

Board Postpones Decision To Invalidate Elections

PA2907000194 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2046 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Santo Domingo, 28 Jul (NOTIMEX)—Today, the Dominican Central Electoral Board (JCE) decided to postpone its decision invalidating elections in the national district, including Santo Domingo, which represents 38 percent of the total number of votes.

During a lengthy session on Wednesday, the JCE determined, however, that the elections would be repeated in the capital of a bordering province, an unprecedented decision in the political history of this Caribbean nation.

The national district's electoral board invalidated the elections in Santo Domingo, capital of the Dominican Republic, after its magistrates confirmed irregularities that decisively affected the results of the 16 May elections.

The electoral board decided to reiterate an accusation by the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) that members of the Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC) had manipulated the electoral lists to favor the candidacy of President Joaquin Balaguer.

The official party objected to the verdict of the National District Board and requested the revocation of the JCE decision. The JCE, the highest electoral authority in the country, will have to announce a final decision within five days.

Provisional results have given a minimum advantage of 30,000 votes to President Balaguer, who is seeking his seventh term in office over social democratic candidate Jose Francisco Pena Gomez, who exposed the rampant fraud.

Pena Gomez, of the PRD, insists the JCE must invalidate elections throughout the entire country and says the official party had altered the electoral lists, changed the names of voters on the lists, distorted tally sheets, and misplaced electoral records.

While controversy over the electoral process continues, a commission formed by two former Supreme Court presidents and two Dominican newspaper directors has urged the PRD and the PRSC to strive for an agreement that will prevent a violent outcome.

According to this commission, the irregularities recorded during the 16 May elections polarized Dominican society, which was hoping to undertake a last-ditch effort for an agreement that would reestablish democracy in the Caribbean nation.

Balaguer Views Election Crisis

PA2807223094 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2012 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Santo Domingo, 28 Jul (EFE)—Today Dominican President Joaquin Balaguer rejected the establishment of a provisional government, as recommended by the opposition, as a solution to the post-electoral impasse affecting the Dominican Republic.

Balaguer said the Central Electoral Board (JCE) must announce the final results of the 16 May general elections prior to any agreement with the opposition.

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"I totally oppose the establishment of a provisional government, because it would disrupt the country's constitutional order. I believe anything that tends to disrupt order is detrimental to the stability of the Republic," Balaguer said.

The Dominican president added "the line to follow is established by the law itself: Wait for a decision by the JCE, the only institution entitled to rule on this issue."

Balaguer said a ruling is essential before the political leaders can assemble together to reach to an agreement, recalling that the JCE ruling cannot be appealed and that "the continuity or discontinuity of the Dominican Republic's constitutional order depends on the JCE decision."

He said Dominican political leaders must wait for the final JCE decision in order to search for a solution to the country's crisis.

Balaguer said because the JCE rulings are not appealable, everyone must wait for the final results and abide by its decisions, because it is the only institution entitled by the Constitution and the laws to resolve the situation.

He said the country is undergoing an election and political crisis, and he believes one must be solved first, then the other.

The Dominican president said the post-electoral crisis will be completely resolved when the JCE issues its verdict, "for which the country is waiting."

"I totally favor, totally identify with the criteria that seeks a political agreement but only after the election crisis has been resolved and after the JCE has announced its final decision," Balaguer reiterated.

The Dominican elections took place this past 16 May, and the JCE still has not announced the final results, a fact which has prompted a crisis due to the accusations of fraud made by the opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD).

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Apostolic Nuncio Explains Meeting With Drug Lords

PA2807202794 Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0430 GMT 28 Jul 94

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[Text] Geronimo Prigione, the apostolic nuncio in Mexico, tonight admitted to meeting with the Arellano Felix brothers, the alleged murderers of Cardinal Posadas Ocampo.

[Begin recording] [Prigione] Regarding reports published in various national newspapers on events leading up to the murder of the much-remembered Cardinal Juan Jesus Posadas, I deem it convenient to make the following clarifications:
1. In December and January, Father Gerardo Montano of Tijuana brought brothers Ramon and Benjamin Arellano Felix to the Apostolic Nunciature, on separate occasions, to discuss personal matters with me.
2. As I usually do with every person, I received them in private and listened to them. It was a confidential conversation, not within the framework of the sacrament of confession. Thus, I deem it convenient to clarify that there was no sacramental absolution.
3. According to the provisions of Catholic Church legislation and civil law of all countries, in my capacity as bishop, I am obliged to keep as a professional secret that which people confide to me privately. Consequently, I cannot disclose what was discussed.
4. I can, however, say that at no time did they disclose any crime or new incidents not known to the authorities or the public. Therefore, I asked them both to surrender to justice authorities in this country, who should investigate the truth and establish responsibilities of any kind.

This is the end of my clarification.

[Unidentified reporter] Will you make further clarifications to the Mexican Government if asked to do so?

[Prigione] Listen, if you are referring to what was discussed in both meetings, I cannot do it. I repeat, there is nothing new. There is nothing new. I naturally must keep the secret. The pope received so many people before and after the war. They went to confide their problems in him and to seek advice, and what they discussed was never made known.

The bishops, the pope, and priests are obliged to receive the people, listen to their problems, and guide them to correct, if necessary, anything that needs to be corrected.

[Reporter] Is the president of the republic aware that Catholic bishops in Mexico met here today throughout the day?

[Prigione] Certainly. He also has a copy of this clarification.

[Reporter] Is the Posadas case closed?

[Prigione] I don't think so. Authorities will continue to investigate through means they deem opportune.

[Reporter] Monsignor, did the Arellano brothers ask for your advice? Why did they want to talk to you about?

[Prigione] They wanted to let their feelings out. I listened to them and told them what I thought was right, as every good pastor—a minister of church who guides the souls—does. This is independent of the brothers' responsibilities before Mexican law and civil authorities.

[Reporter] How long did the meeting with these people last?

[Prigione] I think about one hour.

[Reporter] What kind of mood they were in?

[Prigione] They were concerned, fearful, and eager to seek solutions to their problems.

[Reporter] Were Ramon and Benjamin Arellano Felix directly involved in the homicide of Cardinal Posadas?

[Prigione] I don't know about that. This is beyond my jurisdiction, and it is for the authorities to determine.

[Reporter] You asked them to surrender to the authorities. Did they express their desire to do so?

[Prigione] All they told me was that they were going to think about it.

[Reporter] Can you comment on the meeting held here today at the Nunciature?

[Prigione] The holding of this meeting and my clarification on the meeting with the Arellano brothers is coincidental. We went to a dinner and met here, but this is not connected with my clarification.

[Reporter] Who was here today?

[Prigione] Bishops Suarez, Reynoso, Sandoval, and various other bishops. We hold periodic meetings, and it is a normal procedure.

[Reporter] When you went out, did you only go out to dine?

[Prigione] Certainly. This is the pope's home. People come here to talk and feel at home. [end recording]

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El Salvador

Parties Reach Accord on Choosing New Supreme Court

PA2907041494 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 28 Jul 94 p 2

[Excerpt] Legislative Assembly President Gloria Salguero Gross announced at 2240 [date not given] that all the parties had reached an agreement on choosing a new Supreme Court and that the judicial branch president has received the approval of the 84 deputies.

The deputies opened the doors to the conference room at the legislative assembly to inform the reporters: "We have a court."

Immediately following the announcement, Deputy Julio Gamero wrote on a blackboard the names of the lawyers who comprise the Supreme Court: Jose Domingo Mendez (president); Rene Hernandez Valiente (first magistrate); Mario Solano (second magistrate); Orlando Banos Pacheco (third magistrate); and Enrique Argumedo (fourth magistrate).

"This is a triumph of democracy; let us forget the past," said Assembly President Salguero Gross when asked about the rift within the opposition.

The impasse was broken after a group of PDC [Christian Democratic Party] members declared themselves free to vote on the issue of the court and announced they were willing to reach an agreement with ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance]. [passage omitted]

New Supreme Court President Remarks on Appointment

PA2907050294 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 29 Jul 94

[From the "Up-to-Date" newscast]

[Text] Jose Domingo Mendez, the new president of the Supreme Court of Justice, promised today to fight against common criminals, organized crime, and all those organizations that support organized crime groups. These struggles will be among the main challenges of his administration. Mendez said the law will be strictly enforced despite those people or sectors involved in crimes.

The new Supreme Court president has already drafted his working plans and has set his priorities. It is very important for the new Supreme Court president to ensure the people's calmness and safety, and this is why he said one of his immediate priorities will be to combat common criminals, especially organized crime:

[Begin Mendez recording] There is an overall feeling—and I agree—that the law must be strictly enforced on all groups or individuals who support this kind of crime. [end recording]

Meanwhile, the joint group that investigated illegal, armed groups presented its report today and recommended improvements for those auxiliary departments in the judicial branch that are responsible for conducting investigations and that the guilty parties be brought to justice. The new Supreme Court president listened to the recommendations and said measures will be adopted, especially to put an end to corrupt judges, the ones who, on many occasions, allow criminals to go free:

[Begin Mendez recording] We must improve their income. We must improve salaries paid to employees and judges. We must make the judges feel proud, an essential element for the judge to administer better justice in the country. [end recording]

Dr. Jose Domingo Mendez said the new Supreme Court of Justice is an independent branch and has no ties with any sector. The new official said that in the new phase the Judicial Branch is now entering, justice will be made accessible to everyone without discrimination.

Guatemala

De Leon on Increased Security, U.S. Travel Advisory

PA2907042994 Guatemala City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 28 Jul 94 p 3

[Text] President Ramiro De Leon Carpio said yesterday improvements in the country's infrastructure and increased security measures by the police and Army are being conducted so the United States will eliminate the travel advisory [preceding two words in English] as soon as possible and will allow more tourists to come.

The president said aside from offering advantages to the Guatemalan people, better conditions are also sought to receive foreign visitors and guarantee their personal security.

For this reason, he added, these efforts are being made in order to get the U.S. Government to remove this sanction against Guatemala, which has caused the loss of millions.

De Leon Carpio said progress had been made, pointing to a recent letter USIS had sent to his office congratulating the police for rescuing a U.S. citizen and a Panamanian citizen who had been kidnapped on 25 July in a sector of Zone 21.

"Police and military forces are carrying out all the preventive measures that guarantee the security of tourism in Guatemala; thus, we hope the travel advisory will be eliminated as soon as possible. roads throughout the country are being repaired for this same reason," De Leon added.

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Mutual Support Group Accepts Human Rights Commission

PA2807044094 Guatemala City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 25 Jul 94 p 10

[Text] The Guatemalan public has finally accepted the terms by which the government and the guerrillas created the commission that will investigate human rights violations committed during the war, even though the identification of the responsible individuals will not be known. The Mutual Support Group (GAM), composed of relatives of missing persons, which for more than a decade has struggled for the creation of the commission, has stated "the contents of the agreement do not satisfy our moral needs," but, nevertheless, it added: "We are pleased."

According to GAM, the creation of the commission "is one of the priorities" of the persons displaced by the conflict, but the price they had to pay for the acceptance (missing or murdered leaders) "was too high."

GAM added it will maintain "a vigilant attitude so this and all other signed agreements will not be merely documents signed to end the armed conflict," a fear shared by Monsignor Rodolfo Quezada, president of the National Reconciliation Commission.

GAM leader Nineth Montenegro did not hide her disgust, because political and not ethical aspects prevailed during the negotiations between the government's Peace Commission (Copaz) and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG).

Montenegro has recognized the document that defines the "Commission for Historical Clarification" (CEH), which is the official name, "is not what we would have liked, but it is what is needed for the moment and what the public permits."

Since the signing of the agreement, which created the commission on 23 June, and after realizing "the fact this agreement is irreversible," GAM has carried out activities such as forums and marches to analyze and support it. The government and the URNG agreed in Oslo (Norway) to create a commission to clarify "with total objectivity, equity, and impartiality the violations and violent actions linked to the armed conflict," which began in 1961.

Nicaragua

Government Approves Bond Revaluation Compensation Bill

PA2907040794 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2135 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Managua, 28 Jul (NOTIMEX)—Official sources announced today the Nicaraguan Government had approved a bond revaluation compensation bill as an alternative to resolving the issue of properties confiscated from U.S. citizens.

Presidential spokespersons said President Violeta Chamorro decided to approve the document, which is published in this Thursday's OFFICIAL GAZETTE, in order to prevent the likelihood of future pressures from the United States.

The United States will begin to certify on 30 July whether those governments where lawsuits have been filed by U.S. citizens whose properties have been appropriated have established mechanisms aimed at resolving the conflict.

The U.S. State Department could freeze assistance to those Latin American countries that are determined to leave this issue unresolved, according to the recent Helms-Gonzalez Amendment, promoted by Jesse Helms, Republican senator representing North Carolina.

Concerning Nicaragua, this could mean the country would stop receiving U.S. financing worth approximately $60 million.

Chamorro signed the Special Compensation Payment Bond Revaluation Law [Ley Especial de Valorizacion de Bonos de Pago de Indemnizacion], which the National Assembly approved by majority vote in July. The special law is intended to be an option for those individuals whose property is in the hands of third persons.

The bill is aimed at contributing to the solution of the property conflict, which constitutes "without any doubt one of the most significant obstacles to reaching a national reconciliation," the president said.

The bonds carry a 15-year maturity period, are backed by state assets, and can be used in fiscal, banking, and financial transactions, as well as to participate in the privatization process of state enterprises.

The National Federation of Owners of Confiscated Property [FNC] has expressed its reluctance in accepting this compensation mechanism for resolving the issue of assets appropriated and transferred to third parties during the previous Sandinist government (1979-1990).

In addition to the FNC's reluctance, Chamorro is also confronting another problem with respect to the number of U.S. citizens whose assets were appropriated.

This controversy is taking place because the Nicaraguan Government only intends to acknowledge claims by those individuals with U.S. citizenship at the time when the appropriation took place, meaning the compensation plan excludes those Nicaraguans who acquired U.S. citizenship during the past years.

According to Washington, more than 500 U.S. citizens maintain claims over 1,400 properties. The Managua government only acknowledges approximately 120, however, and the remainder will be processed in the same manner as Nicaraguan claims.

Two months prior to stepping down from power in 1990, the Daniel Ortega government (1980-1990) distributed

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nearly 5,000 homes, opulent residences, and thousands of hectares of property to militant Sandinists, as well as to residents of underprivileged neighborhoods throughout the country.

Chamorro, Finance Minister Pleased With New Bond Law

PA2807203394 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 28 Jul 94

[From the "This Morning" newscast]

[Text] The finance minister has said that extraordinary progress for Nicaragua has been made with signing of the bond law, which took place at the Presidency on Wednesday afternoon. In brief statements to journalists, Dr. Pereira said he was pleased with the achievements reached after four years of work.

Meanwhile, President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro said she was pleased with her government's success in the signing of this agreement, at which the owners of confiscated property were present. There was consensus at last, according to Mrs. Violeta.

Let us first listen to statements by Finance Minister Emilio Pereira and then statements by Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro.

[Begin recording] [Pereira] After four years of struggle in an extremely sensitive area, in which Mrs. Violeta has constantly been telling us to resolve the property problem—even though a consensus could not be reached during the first three years—today with the signing of this agreement, we believe we have made significant progress for Nicaragua. [Words indistinct] the majority of the people who organize themselves to get her elected president of the Republic. This was a big event, and that is why we invited here the owners of confiscated property, who led the campaign to get this law signed. We wanted them to be present at the signing of this law.

[Chamorro] I thank the Nicaraguan friends, who are here accompanying me in signing this law. It is really something we all wanted. It took time, but it is never too late. Thank God, it was done with the consensus of the National Assembly. We now have a mechanism to solve all problems. Greater value is given to the [words indistinct]. It will be used to compensate people and to find solutions to problems.

I want to tell you something. I inherited a great burden. I have always said that I never thought that I would inherit such huge problems like the ones I inherited four years ago. We have found ways to reach a consensus between the owners of confiscated property and other Nicaraguans. We found a solution to this puzzle. I thank all my friends, who are here with me today, thanks to all those who have stayed up late here with me and with Dr. Pereira, as well as with the members of the National Assembly. We are pleased to see that the mission has been accomplished. I believe we are going to be able to find solutions to all the problems that we inherited. We must be patriotic along with all Nicaraguans so that we can find a solution to all of these problems. [end recording]

Government Seeking Assistance in Purchasing Electricity

PA2807202894 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 28 Jul 94

[From the "This Morning" newscast]

[Text] The Nicaraguan Government has initiated efforts with the international community to obtain economic assistance in view of the imminent need to procure electricity. Rodolfo Orozco, public relations official at the Nicaraguan Institute of Energy [INE], said efforts have begun with the community of donor countries.

The efforts are being made by Foreign Trade Minister Erwin Kruger, according to the public relations official. The INE is initially planning to buy electric energy from Costa Rica and Panama, Orozco said.

The INE initiated a power rationing program on 25 June with four- and eight-hour power outages.

Panama

Treaty Negotiator on Accepting Haitians

PA2807202994 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 27 Jul 94 p B5

["Text" of letter from Dr. Carlos Lopez Guevara, Panama Canal Treaty negotiator and Labor Party president, to legislator Olimpo Saez; in Panama City on 18 July—passages in boldface as published]

[Text] 18 July 1994

Honorable Legislator

Olimpo Saez

Dear Honorable Legislator Saez:

You have deemed it appropriate to ask me two questions, which I will answer as follows:

"1. Can the Panamanian Government receive 10,000 refugees from the sister Republic of Haiti; can it settle them on an island or any part of national territory without an agreement or accord which must be approved or rejected by Panama's Legislative Assembly? [no closing quotation marks as published]

Response: In the absence of a treaty serving as a basis for governmental actions, every instrument whereby the Panamanian state acquires an obligation before third-party countries or international organizations necessitates the approval of our Assembly to enable the obligation to enter into force. This is mandated by Article 143, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution, together with Article 179, Paragraph 9, **ibidem.**

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I have read with consternation and astonishment several rulings by the current Supreme Court of Justice modifying the Constitution and validating administrative accords that have not been sanctioned by the Legislative Assembly. These rulings have given constitutional character to simple agreements or "executive agreements" [preceding two words published in English] that are not part of our constitutional juridical tradition. This error can only be amended now through constitutional reform, establishing clearly that the executive branch must not, nor can it, commit Panama to international agreements without the Legislative Assembly giving its consent.

"Can the U.S. Government, by virtue of the Panama Canal Treaty and with the consent of the Panamanian executive, give shelter to 10,000 Haitian citizens on the military bases without violating the Panama Canal Treaty?"

Response: The Panama Canal Treaty is an instrument of cooperation and coordination between Panama and the United States until 31 December 1999. The treaty contemplates the possibility that, through the **Joint Committee**, the two countries can reach various accords.

I believe that Panama and the United States can assign Panamanian territory, which has been defined as a defense site under the Torrijos-Carter Treaty, a use **other than** military. Let's see:

A. The Agreement for the Implementation of Article 4 of the Panama Canal Treaty establishes, in Article 1, Paragraph 1, the following:

"Article 1—Definitions:

Defense Sites: Areas and installations within these defense sites, whose utilization, by virtue of this Treaty, the Republic of Panama grants the U.S. Armed Forces for the purposes specified in the Panama Canal Treaty, **and in any other manner the Panamanian and U.S. Governments shall agree on.** Other uses are identified in Paragraph 1 of Annex A of this Treaty."

B. The Preamble of the said Treaty contains similar provisions, which I copy as follows:

"PREAMBLE:

"In order to determine regulations applicable to members of the U.S. Armed Forces, civilian elements, and dependents accompanying them during their stay in the Republic of Panama for the specific purposes of the Panama Canal Treaty **or in any other manner the two governments shall agree on** in order to regulate the use of the defense sites."

It is obvious that the United States, as well as Panama, anticipated the possibility that, during the time in which the Panama Canal Treaty is in force—that is, until 31 December 1999—activities other than those involved in the Canal's defense could be conducted at defense sites. Obviously, our country's consent would be required in any such case.

I must remind my fellow countrymen that the Neutrality Treaty establishes that Panama is **not** obligated to any country other than the United States to have defense sites before or after 1999, and that the Panama Canal Treaty **limits** the United States by stipulating that it can only conduct, within the defense sites, those activities that are expressly authorized under the Treaty. Panama, however, as a territorial sovereign, can broaden the use of these sites jointly with the United States until the end of the current century. Following this date, Panama will have full freedom of action on the use of its territory.

Article 3 of the Agreement for the Implementation of Article 4 of the Panama Canal Treaty created a coordination mechanism between the two governments—that is, the Joint Committee. This organization is a **joint one**; in other words, an agreement between the representatives of the **two** countries is required to make decisions. To better illustrate this, I will cite Points 1 and 2 of Article 3 as follows:

"Article 3—Joint Committee

"1. When this agreement enters into force, there will be a Joint Committee that will comprise a representative of the Republic of Panama and a representative of the U.S. Government, at a level and rank that the two governments agree upon, and who may have one or more assistants on an equal basis.

"2. The Joint Committee will perform the duties specifically assigned by the provisions of this agreement **and others that the two governments may task them with to implement this agreement."** (the emphasis is mine)

The agony the Haitian people are suffering no doubt compels us to give signs of solidarity, carrying out specific actions that may serve as an immediate **palliative** to the despair of our brothers who have been overpowered by autocracy.

I insist that accepting refugees would be a **palliative**, not a solution, and this is why America must take up again the diplomatic initiative and bring the topic to the OAS, removing it from the United Nations.

The number of refugees has increased with **the threat of an invasion**, and for this reason we must use diplomacy to prevent an invasion of Haiti. Once it is affirmed that there will be **no** invasion, the exodus of Haitians will decrease or end.

The OAS must sponsor a formula for a diplomatic solution, asking the United Nations to lift the embargo imposed on Haiti's **poor**. The famine the embargo has unleashed is contributing greatly to the number of refugees. The embargo must end.

The resumption of the diplomatic course would mean the OAS would appoint a commission to meet with Haitian authorities **in situ**—in other words, Haiti—and abroad to foster general elections sponsored by the OAS within the next six months.

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Because no other country is hurt more on a daily basis by the Haitian crisis than the Dominican Republic, a citizen of that country must be part of the commission I am proposing.

The mediation or conciliatory duty of the OAS must be instituted to seek a peaceful resolution to Haiti's internal dispute.

If General Cedras accepted the **Governor's Island** agreement, we must investigate why that formula was not implemented. We must seek the cause not just **within** Haiti, but also outside to reconcile the conflicting interests and facilitate a formula that will permit the process of democratization to begin in Haiti without invasions, embargoes, or impositions from abroad but as the result of its own self-determination.

Please accept the assurances of my great consideration.

[Signed] Sincerely, Dr. Carlos Lopez Guevera

Planning Minister-Designate on Negotiating Foreign Debt

PA2907033494 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 27 Jul 94 p A1

[Report by Julio Cesar Aizprua]

[Text] Guillermo Chapman, minister-designate of planning and economic policy, said yesterday the new government has a specific plan to negotiate with international financial institutions [IFIS], because it "does not intend to revive" that which the current government has negotiated.

Speaking to members of the Association of Panamanian Industrialists, Chapman insisted the new government will not negotiate the foreign debt right away, because that would be "a stupidity" that cannot occur. If we were to do that, he added, we would be "negotiating blindly."

Chapman said the new administration's top priority is to solve social problems, not the foreign debt.

President-elect Ernesto Perez Balladares' government is facing a public debt estimated at $7.3 billion. Of this figure, $2.08 billion represents the domestic debt, and approximately $5.3 billion the foreign debt.

Official figures indicate the country owes $1.5 billion to the IFIS.

Chapman said, however, Panama's most pressing problem is poverty, not the foreign debt.

Half the population lives in poverty, and half of the poor live in extreme poverty in Panama; in other words, they have no income with which to feed themselves.

The estimated unemployment rate is 13.5 percent, but there are those who place this figure at 18 percent. Chapman said the solution to this problem is essential for the new administration. If it does not solve it, it would only be deceiving itself and displaying social insensitivity.

Poverty is caused by the high unemployment rate, a rate which never declines despite the current high rate of production growth.

According to the new minister, the country's economic growth is about to end if the current economic structure prevails.

Something similar will happen to our ability to generate foreign exchange, because it depends on services rendered for "old" activities, the growth rate of which is very low, he said.

Thus, Chapman proposed the need to make "revolutionary changes," which would include changing regulations on labor relations as well as the existing high tariff protection.

In addition, the economist said industrial laws must be respected, "as long as they conform to the new economic policy in the country."

Regarding this point, industrialist Joaquin J. Vallarino agreed industrial policies must be modernized, but, he added, the "rules of the game" cannot be changed overnight.

Vallarino said the rules cannot be changed every time policies are changed.

"This is something that must be harmonized through consultation, dialogue, and understanding," because there are many depositors of savings accounts in Panama who would be hurt by abrupt changes, he warned.

Concerning the new economic plan the Perez Balladares administration will implement, Vallarino insisted "it is not that different" from the so-called Ford Plan or the plan signed by former President Ricardo de la Espriella in 1983.

Vallarino said that the industrialists insist the laws must be preserved and that the "rules of the game" must be known, because "this is very serious" and affects present and future stockholders.

Otherwise, he said, no one will invest in a country where laws are hastily changed or where they are changed before commitments are agreed on or fulfilled.

Meanwhile, Chapman disclosed the new economic plan is already being drafted.

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Argentina

Iranian Woman Released, Another Male Arrested in AMIA Case

PY2807145294 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1411 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 28 Jul (NA) — Police spokespersons have indicated that the Iranian woman arrested at Ezeiza International Airport as she was preparing to leave the country was released during the past few hours.

Regarding the attack against the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association [AMIA], it has also been learned that a male of approximately 30 years of age was arrested on 27 July at the [Buenos Aires] metropolitan airport.

Iranian Military Officer Main Suspect in AMIA Case

PY2807191294 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1501 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 28 Jul (EFE)—Diplomatic sources indicated today that the investigation into last week's attack against the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires confirms that Zbhi Tsufaili [name as received], an Iranian military officer, is the main suspect as the brains behind the attack.

It is believed that Tsufaili, a former secretary general of the Hizballah (Party of God) in Lebanon, could have sought refuge in that country.

Foreign Minister Guido di Tella said: "We have not asked for extradition—at least, not yet." He admitted that the "request is a possibility" if it is established that the pro-Iranian Followers of God group was behind the attack in which 95 people died and 12 are still missing.

The government and the investigators "for the time being have more suspicion than evidence," the minister added in an attempt to answer the expectation in the media and among citizens created by official assertions that the case is about to be resolved.

Di Tella emphasized: "I believe President Carlos Menem said this on 27 July, and I will repeat it today: We will adopt measures when we have the evidence." He thus referred to the "Iranian connection" on which the investigation is now centered.

Di Tella said: "The world is looking at us, not just because of what happened at the AMIA on 18 July, but also to see how we manage the matter, in other words, whether we act within the law and with prudence or whether we go off course and adopt measures that are not yet justifiable."

The foreign minister stressed that Argentina "is not about to break relations with any country," and that if President Carlos Menem's government "takes such a serious step it will be because there is sufficient evidence" that a nation supported the perpetrators of the attack, which, he stressed, "today does not exist." [passage omitted]

Spanish Foreign Minister on Iranian Ambassador, Haiti

PY2807190994 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1604 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 28 Jul (NA)—President Carlos Menem met this morning with Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana Madariaga, who stressed that Iranian Ambassador to Argentina Hadi Soleiman Pour "was not expelled" from Madrid.

Solana Madariaga emphasized that the Iranian Government "recalled Pour after a 3-year tour of duty, first as charge d'affaires and then as ambassador." He said the Iranian's behavior "was always compatible with his diplomatic status."

He made these remarks after meeting with Menem at Government House, where they discussed bilateral relations. Both countries have troops with United Nations units in the former Yugoslavia. Solana Madariaga said he would like "a solution to that conflict."

Regarding the Iranian ambassador, Solana Madariaga emphasized that "he was recalled by his government when his tenure as ambassador concluded."

Soleiman Pour was accused of being "involved in the European terrorist network" in an article in the Spanish magazine TIEMPO. According to rumors, he was invited to leave Spain after the article was published.

He told journalists accredited to Government House that the Iranian's departure from Spain "was normal" and denied that Felipe Gonzalez' government had made any express requests.

He stressed, based on the information available to him, that Soleiman Pour's behavior "was always compatible with his diplomatic status," and reiterated that he was not expelled from Spain. He said that "when his government realized he had fulfilled his mission he was recalled."

He emphasized that he has no information that the diplomat behaved incorrectly, and linked the Buenos Aires and London attacks "to the Middle East peace process."

[Buenos Aires Radio Nacional Network in Spanish at 1600 GMT on 28 July reports: "Finally, regarding the situation in Haiti, the Spanish foreign minister indicated that within the sphere of the UN Security Council, of which Spain and Argentina are members, contacts have already started.

["He indicated that today he spoke by phone to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and added that

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during the course of this week a resolution could be sent that would be considered a final caution, a serious signal for the non-legitimate Haitian authorities to normalize the situation in that country."]

Falklands Petroleum Talks Held With UK

PY2607225094 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 16 Jul 94 p 2

[Article by Nicholas Tozer]

[Text] The third meeting of the High-Level Group Argentine and British delegations closed yesterday in this city with a five-point statement. It said that "the meeting had taken place in a cordial and constructive atmosphere" and "both sides agreed that the group would hold an additional meeting in September."

According to the statement the High Level Group "was created to explore the implications of the legislative measures on the continental shelf announced by the United Kingdom and Argentina on November 22, 1991, as well as the scope of the activities which result from those measures."

News agency stories last night quoted an unnamed Foreign Ministry official as stating that if the British government took any unilateral steps in the area there would be no meeting in September, adding that yesterday's talks broke off at midday after it became impossible to make further progress. The official pointed out that the Argentine government would consider any unilateral action by Britain "illegal" and take "legal action against the UK and any companies taking part."

The same source said the British delegation had indicated that the "success of selling licences depended on the interested companies," a comment which was interpreted as a challenge to the Argentine warnings.

Among other considerations the anonymous Foreign Ministry source is quoted as saying that the British delegation went into the talks claiming "sovereign rights" to which they are not entitled and was rated as "inadmissible" by the "Argentine spokesmen who were part of the delegation." Despite the fact that the spokesmen said the British delegation found "cooperation" on oil in the South Atlantic "unacceptable" he concluded that the talks were nonetheless important and should continue.

Foreign Minister Guido di Tella earlier in the day expressed his "pessimism" over the outcome of the talks and hinted at the possibility of "failure," but the joint statement indicates that "both delegations noted the progress already made in developing the Southwest Atlantic continental shelf" adding that during the two days of talks both delegations had "a full exchange of information on the respective governments' legislative measures and proposals. They agreed to reflect further on the proposals and suggestions for cooperation made by both sides." Guido di Tella not available for comment last night.

The meeting is held "under the formula on sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas agreed by both governments and recorded in paragraph 2 of the British-Argentine Joint Statement issued in Madrid on October 19, 1989."

The talks were headed on the Argentine side by Foreign Policy Under-Secretary Rogelio Pfirter, while the British delegation was headed by William Marsden, Assistant Under-Secretary for the Americas at the Foreign Office.

Additionally the islanders were represented by Phyllis Rendell, director of Education on the islands, who is also a member of the Falklands Oil Study Group; and Nigel Bannin of the British Geopolitical Survey, who are technical advisers on oil matters to the Falkland Islands government.

While details of the talks were not made public, the HERALD learned from oil industry analysts close to the meeting reported that the British delegation had gone into the talks with a broad agenda—under the agreed formula on sovereignty—with the hope of finding ways of achieving cooperation between Argentina and Britain in the area. [sentence as published] Questions such as licensing partnerships, support of the industry from the mainland, cooperation on environmental matters and other ways of working together on offshore oil development in the South Atlantic were reported as part of the package aimed at looking into the possibility of reaching a joint venture in the area, which would probably take the form of Argentine companies playing a role in the development of an oil industry in the continental shelf.

The islander representatives attended the meeting as part of the British government delegation. In late June the island's Executive Council (ExCo) adopted a draft on the Offshore Minerals Bill 1994 [OMB'94] which was submitted to the British Foreign Office as the Falkland Island government's proposal for oil legislation, according to a recent issue of PENGUIN NEWS, published in Port Stanley.

According to PENGUIN NEWS "subject to any amendments by the British government the OMB'94 will be gazetted as soon as possible and submitted to the island's Legislative Council (LegCo) probably in September.

The island's Offshore Petroleum Licensing Regulations 1994 is also to be submitted to the British government. This sets out the conditions for the off-shore exploration for oil and its exploitation.

The islanders have also been analysing the recommendations made by the British Geopolitical Society, a report on oil taxation systems and another on ways of licensing companies interested in exploring for oil.

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Labor, Government Sign Agreement on Salary Negotiations

PY2807015894 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2245 GMT 26 Jul 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 26 Jul (NA)—Labor Minister Jose Armando Caro Figueroa said today that all labor unions who request labor-manager negotiations "will be gradually called" to discuss salaries and working conditions.

During a news conference at the Labor Ministry, Figueroa said that the agreement signed with labor leaders and entrepreneurs yesterday means that "each side is willing to negotiate with the other side what has been agreed to in writing." He was referring to future salary negotiations.

The minister added: "This does not mean that the CGT [General Confederation of Labor] will continue maintaining its position in salary negotiations, or that UIA [Argentine Industrial Union] representatives will maintain theirs."

"The government will approve the creation of labor-manager commissions when parties request them. That is the commitment we have been fulfilling day after day," the minister said.

UIA Chairman Jorge Blanco Villegas, in turn, said that his institution "supports decentralized negotiations" by companies or production lines. He made clear, however, that he would not oppose "discussions at whatever level is most appropriate," thus virtually accepting negotiations according to activity.

Labor Minister Caro Figueroa, UIA Chairman Blanco Villegas, and the CGT secretary general [Antonio Casia] today held a news conference to explain the implication of the Framework Agreement for Employment, Productivity, and Social Equity, which was signed at Government House last night.

Blanco Villegas stressed "the constructive dialogue" that led to the signing of the agreement, characterizing it as an "historic event." The UIA chairman said "the labor leadership leans toward constructive dialogue as it has very few times in the past."

Caro Figueroa said that a tripartite commission would be created to follow negotiation results. The minister added that the commission "will receive requests for collective negotiations, and will produce a consensual and gradual schedule for negotiations."

Asked about the unemployment rate, the minister said: "It stresses the inadequacy of current labor laws and the Labor Ministry structure," adding that laws will have to conform "to the new reality of the labor market." Caro Figueroa said the unemployment rate "is of great concern," adding that the indicator is not "an unavoidable and inevitable consequence" of the implementation of present economic policies.

The minister said: "The unemployment rate is a consequence of population growth, immigration, and labor laws adjusted to a new reality."

"The government thinks that in order to create jobs we must maintain the rate of economic growth, must seek a more competitive economy, and must change the labor market rules of the game," Caro Figueroa said.

The minister agreed with President Carlos Menem's remarks that "the incorporation of new technologies is one of the causes of the high unemployment rate."

"This cannot be disputed, as the use of robots and computers affects jobs," Figueroa added.

The minister reiterated that current labor laws "encourage the dismissal of people and discourage contracting new workers." Figueroa said the agreement signed with the UIA and the CGT "will permit the creation of new jobs."

Caro Figueroa said the May unemployment rate "is more frail and more worrying" than the previous month's unemployment rate.

Compulsory Military Service Replaced by Voluntary Service

PY2807221894 Buenos Aires LA NACION in Spanish 26 Jul 94 p 26

[Text] The government yesterday approved a draft bill on voluntary military service submitted by the Armed Forces to President Carlos Menem.

Compulsory military service, which was made law in 1901, has consequently been eliminated on President Menem's orders following the murder of Corporal Omar Carrasco.

Defense Minister Oscar Camilion told LA NACION that the new voluntary system will be implemented in early March 1995, but the campaign to attract volunteers will begin in early September.

The government will only draft youths if an inadequate number volunteers. The government does not want this to happen because it will mean breaking Menem's promise to not draft those born in 1976.

Women will also be able to perform military service, although only the Army is willing to accept them. Contracts will be signed for two years with an option to renew.

Peoples Initiative, Referendum Included in Constitution

PY2807013194 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 27 Jul 94 p 19

[Text] Santa Fe—A clause authorizing Congress and the president of the nation to call referendums on subjects

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that fall within their respective jurisdictions was included in the Constitution last night.

The Constituent Assembly last night discussed and approved two points of the semi-direct participation mechanism: the peoples initiative [iniciativa popular] and the referendum.

The peoples initiative mechanism, which was approved by 216 votes to 38, establishes that any citizen may submit a draft bill to the Chamber of Deputies, which must "expressly analyze it within 12 months." It is noted, however, that this initiative does not include subjects referring to constitutional reforms, international agreements, taxes, budget, or penal issues.

Eduardo Menem, Raul Alfonsin, Antonio Cafiero, and Augusto Alasino, top members of the Constituent Assembly, unexpectedly addressed the session following a series of other speakers. They noted that these two initiatives represent an enhancement of democracy.

The structure of the referendum, which was approved by 213 votes to 37, is also perfectly defined:

- Congress, at the initiative of the Chamber of Deputies, may call a referendum on a draft bill. The executive branch is not empowered to veto the law calling the referendum. If approved by the referendum, the draft bill becomes law and will be promulgated automatically.

- The president may call a referendum on subjects falling under his exclusive jurisdiction, but in this case the referendum will not be binding (as in the previous case) and the peoples' participation will not be compulsory.

The second issue was well negotiated by Peronists and Radicals because the former insisted that the president should also have the power to ask the people's opinion on a determined subject through a referendum. The radicals and other opposition parties maintained that this could prompt a president to "govern through plebiscites." Agreement was finally reached.

- Congress, with the support of the absolute majority of all the members of the two houses, will regulate the subjects, procedures, and determine the need for a referendum.

Brazil

Brazil Not Considering Sending Troops to Haiti

PY2807154494 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Brazil is not considering the possibility of sending troops to Haiti. Foreign Minister Celso Amorim has clarified that the country may participate in a peacekeeping force, under the UN flag, in a second stage of the operation to guarantee democratic stability in Haiti. Itamaraty reasserts that not even a decision made in a UN General Assembly session would make Brazil participate in a multilateral occupation force.

Franco Notes Support for Real, Reaffirms Security for Jewish Community

PY2807222194 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Report by Luiz Augusto Mendonca]

[Text] President Itamar Franco said he is satisfied with the poll results that show the people approve of the Real Plan. On another subject, he said that in view of recent terrorist attacks in Buenos Aires and London the government will guarantee the security of the Jewish community in Brazil.

After opening the National Conference on Foodstuff Security last night, President Itamar Franco said the Jewish community can rest assured because the government is obliged to protect the integrity of all Jews living in the country and has already instructed the various government organizations to reinforce security measures at ports, airports, borders, embassies and consulates, and at synagogues—particularly in Sao Paulo State—to prevent surprise attacks like those conducted in Buenos Aires and London.

President Itamar Franco also commented on the Brazilian Public Opinion and Statistics Institute poll indicating that 75 percent of the people trust the economic plan:

[Begin recording] I think this is very important because the plan seeks to grant economic stability and give Brazil a strong currency. A country's currency represents sovereignty and we hope the people's support for the Real Plan, which is not the plan of any party and which does not seek to support any one candidacy, will help us to pass on the government in a few more months with greater social justice in the country. Tonight we realize that Brazil needs more social justice and more (?freedom), as well as a stronger economy. We believe the Real Plan will grant Brazilians all this. [end recording]

Finally, President Franco commented on the salary increase to be granted to public employees. He said he still has a few doubts and that he will ask the economic team for more information in order to be able to determine the increase to be granted to public employees.

Poll: 75 Percent Approval for Real Plan

PY2907012494 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2200 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] A national poll conducted by IBOPE [Brazilian Public Opinion and Statistics Institute] between 20 and 24 July shows 56 percent of those polled approve of Itamar Franco's administration. The poll, ordered by Planalto Palace, shows that 75 percent of those polled added that they trust in the success of the Real Plan.

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Augusto Marzagao, institutional affairs adviser to the president, said President Franco is very satisfied with the poll. The poll also shows that the president's popularity index is 79 percent, to which President Franco commented that popularity is short-lived but important.

PT's New Campaign Prioritizes Economic Views

PY2807222494 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2325 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Text] Sao Paulo, 27 Jul (AE) - PT [Workers Party] government platform coordinator Marco Aurelio Garcia and Jorge Mattoso, one of the main PT economists, said today that the replacement of Jose Paulo Bisol by Aloizio Mercadante does not change the PT's plans or the action of the party economists. Garcia said: "We are not discussing cabinet names but if Mercadante becomes vice president, nothing can prevent him from becoming the finance minister." He added: "Will Darcy Ribeiro [Democratic Labor Party, PDT, vice presidential candidate] become education minister if Leonel Brizola wins the election?"

Mattoso said the economic coordination of the PT will not be changed following the choice of Mercadante. He said: "Mercadante, Jose Antonio de Paula, Joao Machado, Cesar Benjamin, and I coordinate the PT economic programs. We will continue to work on this as long as he campaigns with Lula, defending our ideas for the Brazilian economy." Mercadante did not speak with journalists all day, waiting for Bisol to announce his resignation. He spoke with Lula and met with advisers to discuss changes in the campaign strategy.

Garcia and Mattoso confirmed that the election of Aloizio Mercadante as vice presidential candidate in the Popular Brazil Front ticket is part of a strategic objective: to centralize the campaign on the economy. "Mercadante's presence on the ticket greatly facilitates the economic approach in this campaign stage," said Garcia, adding: "Mercadante is the main PT economist and campaign spokesman on this subject." Mattoso disclosed that the decision to prioritize the economy in the campaign was a decisive factor when choosing Mercadante, who coordinates the PT economic plans and who is considered the future finance minister in Lula's eventual administration.

Garcia believes Lula's solution will enhance the campaign. "Once the candidates begin to use the free television and radio time, the discussion over the economy—which has been emotional so far—will become more sophisticated," Garcia said. He said Mercadante is the right person to present the PT arguments and to demonstrate that it is not enough to stabilize the economy and curb inflation because growth, the avoidance of recession, and better income distribution are also necessary.

Lula's Coalition Approves New Campaign Strategy

PY2807193694 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2359 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Excerpt] Sao Paulo, 27 Jul (AE)—Workers Party [PT] leaders spent 15 hours in meetings from 22 to 26 July, seeking to reach an agreement to take Senator Jose Paulo Bisol (Brazilian Socialist Party, PSB, Rio Grande do Sul) off the presidential ticket led by Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and to appoint Deputy Aloisio Mercadante (PT-Sao Paulo) as the new vice presidential candidate. During a meeting on 26 July, which was the shortest of all (beginning at 2105 and ending at 2355), Lula appeared tired. Using every argument to persuade the Popular Brazil Front members to support Mercadante's election, Lula said: "We must resolve this now." Lula even went as far as to compare Mercadante with soccer player Branco, saying that Mercadante "will score the winning goal just as Branco did in the Brazil-Netherlands soccer match."

The PT strategy to overcome the technical tie between Lula and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the Brazilian Social Democracy Party candidate, and to win the election is to enable Lula to speak exclusively about his government program. PT leaders believe that, by criticizing the Real Plan, Lula has adopted a negative position in the eyes of the voters. The task of launching attacks will now be assigned to Mercadante because, being an economist, he is considered to be in a better position to take shots at the Real Plan. He will not, however, launch an all-out attack on the plan which, according to surveys, is gaining support among the public. Mercadante will face the challenge of showing that salaries are lagging behind prices.

Leaders of the member parties of the Popular Brazil Front coalition (PT, PSB, People's Socialist Party, Brazilian Communist Party, Communist Party of Brazil, Green Party, and Unified Socialist Workers Party) who attended the meeting with Lula on the evening of 26 July approved the new tactics to be implemented following the election of Mercadante. [passage omitted]

Electoral Board Sets Free Broadcasting Time for Candidates

PY2807225194 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Report by Arlete Sobreira]

[Text] The Superior Electoral Board, TSE, has established the amount of free broadcasting time the nine presidential candidates will have for electoral propaganda on radio and television as of 2 August.

The coalition that supports the candidacy of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Brazilian Social Democracy Party, will have the longest time on the air: 7 minutes and 49 seconds. Orestes Quercia, the Brazilian Democratic

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Movement Party candidate, will have 6 minutes and 15 seconds; Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of the Popular Brazil Front will have 3 minutes and 31 seconds; Esperidiao Amin, Progressive Renewal Party, 4 minutes; Leonel Brizola, Democratic Labor Party, 2 minutes and 34 seconds; Flavio Rocha, Liberal Party, 1 minute and 47 seconds; Walter Queiroz, National Reconstruction Party, 1 minute and 32 seconds; Admiral Fortuna, Social Christian Party, 1 minute and 13 seconds; and Eneas Carneiro, Party for the Redefinition of the National Order, 1 minute and 8 seconds.

Caetano Matano Jr—presidential candidate for the Brazilian Labor Party, PTB—is out of the race because the TSE judges withdrew his right to compete for Planalto Palace. Based on the electoral law, the TSE ruled that the PTB was not fully registered and did not have representatives at the National Congress. With his elimination, only nine presidential candidates will participate in the elections.

'Highest Level of Cooperation Ever' Established With Venezuela

PY2807015694 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 23 Jul 94 p 6

[Text] Brasilia—Illegal mining problems and conflicts between gold prospectors and Ianomami Indians on the Brazilian-Venezuelan border have helped to intensify economic relations between the two countries. During a meeting at Itamaraty on 22 July to discuss the aforementioned problems, representatives of the two governments signed a preliminary document—which will be approved in Caracas next week—which contemplates cooperation in steel production, mining, and transportation.

The agreement foresees the exchange of information on the Manaus-Guri electricity grid system as well as new oil trade operations (bilateral trade totals $800 million per year); joint ventures in mining and steel production; negotiations for a new accord on transportation that include paving the Manaus-Boa Vista stretch of the BR-17 highway; and intensification of dialogue between the two Armed Forces seeking to define measures to prevent illegal mining on the border.

The meeting was attended by Roy Chaderton, director general of the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry, and acting Brazilian Foreign Minister Roberto Abdenur, who emphasized the "unique bilateral diplomatic effort which, in a very short time, has helped to solve not only the Indian and gold-prospector problems but also to establish the highest level of cooperation ever." In Roy Chaderton's opinion, Brazil "is one of the best alternatives" for his country "at this time of political, ethical, and economic recovery."

Chile

Foreign Minister Calls Relations With Iran 'Normal'

PY2807211094 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Imagen Internacional in Spanish 1800 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Carlos Figueroa said today that Chile is maintaining normal diplomatic relations with Iran. He indicated that the accusations against Iran about its alleged involvement in the attack against an Israeli organization in Buenos Aires are so far mere speculation.

[Begin Figueroa recording] I am not going to speculate on relations with a country with which we maintain diplomatic relations. I believe the Argentine Government is taking measures; it may have evidence on which to act. According to the information I have from Buenos Aires, while I am talking to you this morning the Argentine Government is taking more drastic measures. I am not, however, in any condition to confirm this. But this is an Argentine situation. Regarding this issue we don't have any problems, and if we had any we would take the appropriate measures. [end recording]

Spain's Solana Concludes Visit, Departs for Argentina

PY2807160294 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1959 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Text] Santiago, 27 Jul (EFE)—Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana today concluded his official three-day visit to Chile, during which he met with President Eduardo Frei, some ministers, and congressmen.

Solana, who delayed his departure because of poor weather in Santiago, left for Buenos Aires, the second leg of his Southern Cone tour, where he will stay for two days.

Bilateral relations and the regional and world situation, as well as the Ibero-American summits, were the most important subjects Solana discussed with his Chilean interlocutors, who also requested that Spain support the Chilean initiative for a free trade association with the European Union.

In a news conference, Solana promised this support and stressed the profound ties between the two nations, which have yielded "excellent" bilateral relations and increased trade.

Solana and his Chilean counterpart Carlos Figueroa also agreed to establish a mechanism of permanent political consultation that will include two annual meetings at the foreign ministerial level.

During his stay in the Chilean capital, Solana met with Chilean President Eduardo Frei, Senate President Gabriel Valdes, and Chamber of Deputies President Jorge Schaulsohn.

Privately, the Spanish foreign minister also visited the home of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, winner of the Nobel Prize for literature, in Isla Negra, 110 km from the Chilean capital, on the Pacific Ocean.

Before leaving for Argentina, Solana met with Chilean Public Works Minister Ricardo Lagos.

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Commercial relations between Chile and Spain have increased considerably since 1990 after the reestablishment of democracy in Chile, and both nations signed a General Treaty of Cooperation and Friendship in October 1990.

Colombia

Support for Samper's Letter to U.S. Congressmen on Drug Fight

PA2707202094 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 23 Jul 94 p 3B

[Text] The letter sent by President-elect Ernesto Samper Pizano to a group of U.S. congressmen in which he outlines the all-out struggle his administration will wage against the drug cartels was favorably received yesterday by different groups throughout the nation.

Among other things mentioned in his letter, Samper announced that he would imprison the top leaders of the so-called Cali cartel, create an elite corps dedicated to uncovering corruption, and legally and judicially prosecute money laundering.

Senate President Juan Guillermo Angel yesterday gave full support to the contents of the letter sent by Samper to a group of U.S. congressmen. "As congressmen we support Dr. Samper's statements; as members of the Liberal Party and friends we support him also," Angel emphasized.

"We have asked U.S. congressmen to study the president-elect's background and to analyze his campaign so that they can corroborate the honesty of his specific actions," the congressman said.

In turn, Luis Guillermo Giraldo, senator from Risaralda and author of the bill against kidnapping, said Samper's letter was precise. "I do not think you can ask for anything clearer than his letter, and I believe the country backs his position," Giraldo said.

Giraldo added that Samper's attitude "will help restore confidence. It is a commitment by the executive branch, which sets the pace in these cases."

Likewise, Conservative Party Senator-elect Jaime Arias Ramirez said Samper's clarity is very timely. "It is the ideal moment for Colombia to show its goodwill regarding policies in this area," Arias Ramirez said.

He said that U.S. congressmen and officials were asking for definitions, "and these have been stated."

Arias also noted that "the president-elect's letter will be a great help at a time when the Chamber of Deputies is about to study the amendment proposed by Senator Helms.

Narcotics Police Commander Colonel Leonardo Gallardo, in turn, summarized Samper's action as a "totally serious and vigorous position on drug trafficking."

In a conversation with EL TIEMPO, Gallego, regarded as one of the key men within the Police who helped put the late drug boss Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha out of commission, said the Samper letter does not just outline Colombia's committment in the struggle against drug traffickers but also against "all its different manifestations of violence in fighting to the last consequences."

The senior officer warned that the entire police force, not just the narcotics division, is committed to a thorough fight against the drug cartels, chiefly in those departments in which harvesting and production of narcotics occur.

"The U.S. position has been greatly influenced by existing misinformation on what has been done in Colombia. The police have also shown results in countering drug trafficking gangs, which means we must continue onward," he noted.

Samper's letter added that U.S. technical and legal assistance is necessary in order to reach the desired objective. To that effect, he announced the creation of a bilateral high-level commission "to improve actions and promptly overcome any problem or obstacle."

President-Elect on U.S. Ties, New Prosecutor General

PA2807194494 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 28 Jul 94

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"]

[Text] Ernesto Samper Pizano was officially recognized as the new president of the Republic. The National Registrar gave Samper Pizano and his vice president, Humberto de la Calle, their credentials.

In view of charges that institutions in charge of overseeing the state's actions are being politicized, President-elect Ernesto Samper asked congressmen to strip themselves of their political interests when electing an attorney general and a comptroller general and to thoroughly review the candidates' resumes.

[Begin Samper recording] I am sure that regardless of the political affiliations of the candidates for these posts, congressmen will carefully review the resumes of each of the candidates. [end recording]

After receiving his credentials as new president of all Colombians, Samper once again talked about his relations with the United States following his meeting with the U.S. ambassador.

[Begin recording] [Samper] We were able to normalize our relations with the United States, according to the guidelines I gave the ministers. We want to make progress in getting respect for Colombia's right to autonomously determine its policies.

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[Unidentified reporter] What about the new prosecutor general?

[Samper] I think the new prosecutor general is a person with many years of experience in his field; he is a prudent man, who is well educated in the law. I am sure he is going to make a fundamental contribution to the work of the Prosecutor General's Office. [end recording]

Foreign Minister-Designate Interviewed on U.S. Talks

PA2807144994 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Interview with Colombian Foreign Minister-designate Rodrigo Pardo by Caracol News Director Dario Arizmendi and unidentified reporters in Santa Fe de Bogota; from "Caracol's 0600 to 0900" newscast—live]

[Text] [Arizmendi] Three ministers appointed by President-elect Ernesto Samper Pizano visited the United States and met with high-ranking officials from the U.S. Justice, State, Defense, and Commerce Departments, as well as with several U.S. congressmen. Upon returning to Colombia, the ministers have expressed their optimism. Foreign Minister-designate Rodrigo Pardo is here with us today. Good morning, Dr. Pardo.

[Pardo] Good morning, Dario. How are you?

[Arizmendi] In concrete terms, or to use a colloquialism, in hard cash [contante y sonante]. What did you accomplish during your visit?

[Pardo] I believe we took a step forward in normalizing relations. As you may recall, in previous weeks, our relations with the United States were at a low level because of a number of problems and incidents. These problems triggered a series of negative opinions and criticisms. I think it has been a long time since Colombian-U.S. relations have been at such a low point. Incidents during the visit of General Vargas Silva, the approval of the Helms amendment, the suspension of information gathering by U.S. radar in southern Colombia, the rumors surrounding electoral campaigns—even before these things, there were skirmishes over declarations by some Colombians. This situation created an unstable atmosphere vis-a-vis our relations with the United States. I believe the goal of our meetings, our visit—the goal we accomplished—was to take a step forward in normalizing relations so that on 7 August, when the new administration takes over, we can begin to work without any limitations.

[Arizmendi] According to a letter by President-elect Samper addressed to U.S. congressmen, you came up with the idea of proposing a binational commission. Was this idea welcomed?

[Pardo] I believe this idea has been welcomed, and we will continue working on it. Following the meetings yesterday, we—our delegation and the U.S. State Department—issued a joint communique, which stated that the United States will study the proposals we presented, including one on a binational commission.

[Arizmendi] What are the other proposals?

[Pardo] We are mainly interested in economic and commercial topics. We are aware that Colombia must face the very pressing and serious problem of drug trafficking, but Colombia must also give its serious and responsible attention to economic and social problems.

We also made several proposals on topics that could be discussed at the December hemispheric summit. As you may recall, a hemispheric presidential summit has been scheduled for early December. We believe this will be an excellent opportunity to discuss topics like the new identity of Latin America and the hemisphere in general, in light of the new world situation and the creation, by the Samper administration and other governments on the continent, of new international cooperation programs that advance domestic social programs.

In short, we presented various proposals, and we agreed on the possibility of working, being constructive, and raising awareness so that if we ever again have disagreements—when it comes to relations between two countries, the existance of different views and criteria is normal—they will be dealt with in the same constructive, respectful, and friendly manner that has always characterized Colombian-U.S. relations.

[Arizmendi] What commitments did the officials you visited make on the radar installations in southern Colombia?

[Pardo] The State Department agreed with our view, that is, it agreed that we should promptly resume sharing information. The State Department is working with the other agencies with which we had disagreements—particularly the Defense Department—to convince them to resume this process and to achieve together the necessary legislative changes in Congress.

This seems a little more complicated because at present the U.S. Congress is in the process of defining several laws, a task that should be completed prior to 1 October when Congress (?takes a recess) one month before congressional elections in November. In some of these laws, which deal with [word indistinct] topics like intelligence, international cooperation, and so forth, the permits required by the Department of Defense to divulge information could be treated as amendments. Therefore, we are going to continue on that [words indistinct] also, there is a pledge to resume soon the release of radar information.

[Arizmendi] As a result of your conversations with U.S. congressmen, are you for all intents and purposes sure that the House of Representatives will approve the bill approved by the Senate and proposed by Senator [word indistinct]?

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[Pardo] I don't think so, Dario. But it's very difficult to say what will happen. The process is as follows: the law that is being discussed pertains to every modality of foreign aid to all the countries. This law has already been approved by the House, but when it was sent to the Senate, the mico [slang for articles that congressmen add to bills to achieve personal interests] that is the Helms amendment was attached to it. This means that one version of the law was passed by the House and another was passed by the Senate, thus increasing the many differences that exist on this issue.

Now, the procedure in the U.S. Congress in such cases is to hold a conference among representatives of the House and Senate to define the final version of the law. I believe the U.S. Government and particularly the State Department agree that the Helms amendment is inappropriate and unfair to Colombia. They are doing a very serious job, in my opinion, of keeping members of the Senate and House who will participate in the conciliation conference well-informed so they will have better information available in arriving at judgments when dealing with the amendment. I hope the State Department and U.S. Goverment will be successful in this effort.

[First reporter] Mr. Foreign Minister-designate, is the concordat being sewn up or must we wait for the Episcopal Conference to meet with President Samper? Surely you will attend that meeting. Will the new government have to deal with this?

[Pardo] As you know, Guillermo, negotiations are under way. Foreign Minister Noemi Sanin has briefed me on the process. I have said that I agree with the general guidelines, although I have not yet had an opportunity to look into the details. I will do so over the next few days and after 7 August, but I do believe the negotiations have been conducted in a very constructive spirit because, on one hand, the Church has admitted that it is necessary to renegotiate the concordat and, on the other hand, I believe Foreign Minister Sanin has made very significant progress in the negotiations, which she will leave virtually completed or at least quite advanced.

[First reporter] Will you now meet with the top Church officials?

[Pardo] Yes. President Samper will meet with them, and I will accompany him.

[Second reporter] Dr. Pardo, returning to the previous topic, please comment on the following assessment: Last week the government or, rather, the president-elect and you were seeking congressional support to try to slightly change the attitude of certain U.S. institutions. Now the U.S. Government has joined you in seeking a change in Congress' attitude. Is this a valid interpretation?

[Pardo] I would say so, Javier. In fact, I believe that is a very interesting analysis and conclusion because I was under the impression that there were differences among certain sectors of the executive branch concerning the position [words indistinct] the executive. The fact is that during this visit we have been able to visit a broad range of institutions, and we have found that their views are much more [word indistinct] and consistent.

I have been told by the Colombian ambassador to Washington that there have been inter-agency meetings in the United States and that thanks to these meetings the United States has established a single policy and position. I believe that today, in contrast to a week ago, the statements of executive branch officials are quite similar. A week ago there was a certain ambiguity and inconsistency.

In contrast, what we are seeing today, following the Senate vote on the Helms amendment, is that certain sectors are being somewhat unfair to Colombia. I sincerely believe that many of them are uninformed. We must take into consideration that the Colombian issue is not a priority on the U.S. Congress' agenda. Usually the issues that involve Colombia are amendments or parts of laws that involve topics of much more importance to the American people. Thus, at times a vote like the Helms amendment can be done very quickly and unanimously, just before a session ends on a Friday and before the congressmen receive full information on the issue.

[Third reporter] Mr. Foreign Minister-designate Rodrigo Pardo, we thank you very much for having given us this report on the visit you and your colleagues from the Justice and Defense Ministries made to the United States.

Foreign Minister Pardo believes that relations with the United States are beginning to normalize after undergoing a very difficult period, that promises have been made to study Colombian proposals, including the formation of a binational commission, the establishment of de-narcotized relations, the examination of economic and social issues, the establishment of amendments to laws that are being discussed in order to restore radar information, and the blocking of the Helms amendment in the House.

'Guerrilla' Attacks To Continue Until Samper Sworn In

PA2907024094 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 29 Jul 94

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"]

[Text] Attacks by guerrilla groups seeking a negotiated solution to the conflict will continue until what they have called D-Day, 7 August, the day on which President-elect Ernesto Samper will be sworn in.

According to a letter from Francisco Galan, the current offensive is a first phase executed by the FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia] only. If rapprochement with the incoming government is not reached, a

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second phase will be launched, and the 2,500 armed men of the ELN [Army of National Liberation] will participate.

The guerrillas' military targets are the Army's mobile brigades, the elite corps of the police, and paramilitary groups which, according to Francisco Galan, are being sponsored by large landowners and Colombian senators.

In a letter sent to the "Seven O'Clock Newscast," Francisco Galan stated that unconditional negotiations will be required. He added it will have to be a national, integral negotiation with completely new mediators. Galan's letter, which would seem to be strictly a political message, is leaving a long trail of deaths in its path.

Gaviria, Trade Minister on CARICOM Agreement

PA2907045094 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 25 Jul 94 p A6

[Report by Francisco Celis Alban]

[Text] Cartagena—President Cesar Gaviria has said the benefits from free trade agreements such as the one Colombia and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) signed yesterday should improve the standards of living of the participatory nations and close the gap between rich and poor.

Nevertheless, Gaviria, in his speech during the signing ceremony, expressed fear the "breaking up of the world economy into unapproachable economic blocs" could lead to forms of neo-protectionism or collective neo-isolationism, and "that would be very harmful, not only for the development of our region but also for global development. [no closing quotation mark as published]

In addition to signing the agreement, the presidents and heads of state and governments of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean attended the meeting of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) [AEC]. Gaviria said the potential of the ACS as an organization lies in the diversity of its history, economy, and culture.

Meanwhile, Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, Barbadian prime minister, said the ASC should serve as "the coordinating mechanism of a flexible system of relations among member states."

Sandiford said: "Our goal is to move toward sustained development of our human, economic, social, and environmental resources in order to give our people a satisfactory standard of living."

Juan Manuel Santos, Colombian foreign trade minister, said all Colombian products would be able to enter CARICOM markets, because the agreement was signed.

"There are different levels of development among the various nations, and this point explains the asymmetries," Santos said, although he emphasized what is important "is that it is a reciprocal agreement."

According to Santos, Colombian businessmen are already visiting CARICOM member nations, seeking markets for local products.

"The potential market is enormous, because these are islands that import 80 percent of what they consume, and this importation is beneficial for a nation so close territorially as Colombia. If the competitors are aggressive, they will find possibilities to sell in those markets, and the percentage of those markets will reach high levels," the minister said.

The association creates a market of 200 million inhabitants with combined economies of $500 billion and an annual foreign trade of $180 billion.

According to the agreement, Colombia would reduce duties, immediately and progressively, on a group of CARICOM products.

In addition, a reduced number of products would be put on a list for possible future preference.

In the fourth year, the four or five largest CARICOM nations will reciprocate to Colombia in the same manner as was initially granted by our country.

The list agreed upon includes Colombian agricultural commodities, agricultural industry, ice cream, bottled water, beer, rum, crude oil, petroleum byproducts, butane, propane, furs, deodorants, hats, oils, battery fluid, iron, steel, and metal mechanical products.

Objective of the AEC

The objectives outlined by the new Association of Caribbean States highlights the improvement, use, and development of collective Caribbean proficiency in order to attain sustained development in the cultural, economic, social, scientific, and technological spheres.

In addition, there are prospects to rationally explore the potential of the Caribbean Sea through the interaction of the various member states and third nations, as well as to promote ample economic openings for trade and investment that will allow opportunities for cooperation and agreement with the objective of increasing the benefits offered to the Caribbean nations by the resources and assets of the region.

The signatory countries are committed to establishing, consolidating, and expanding, depending on the case, the institutional structures and cooperation agreements that may respond to the diversity of cultural identities, developmental requirements, and regional, normative systems.

The Partners

The AEC consists of Antigua and Bermuda; Barbados; Belize; Costa Rica; Cuba; Dominica; El Salvador;

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Mexico; Grenada; Guatemala; Guyana; Haiti; Honduras; Jamaica; Bahamas; Nicaragua; Panama; Dominican Republic; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Saint Lucia; Suriname; Trinidad and Tobago; and Venezuela.

A separate clause pertains to the participation of the following territories as associate members:

Anguila; Bermuda; the Cayman Islands; the British Virgin Islands (U.S. Virgin Islands); Montserrat (Puerto Rico); the French Republic (by way of Guadeloupe, Guayana, and Martinique); and the Kingdom of the Netherlands (Aruba and Dutch Antilles)

Paraguay

New Air Force Chief of Staff Appointed

PY2807224994 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 22 Jul 94 p 10

[Excerpt] General Hector Adriano Ocampos Diaz has been appointed Air Force chief of staff and head of the National Search and Rescue Service, which is subordinated to the Air Force. Colonel Livio M. Espinoza Ayala was appointed acting commander of the 1st Airborne Brigade replacing Gen. Ocampo Diaz.

During the ceremony yesterday 3d Corps Commander General Evelio Favio Benitez said: "Those who want to divide Paraguayan society between civilians and military are not doing the nation any favors."

Benitez added that the Armed Forces understand that sovereignty means maintaining the national status quo, assuring the capacity for self-determination, and coexisting with other nations on an equal and legal footing without permitting any intervention in internal affairs or participation in similar processes in other nations. [passage omitted]

Peru

APRA Leaders Move To Change Party Electoral System

PY2707221494 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 17 Jul 94 p A4

[Text] Former APRA [American Popular Revolutionary Alliance] Senators Abel Salinas and Mercedes Cabanillas, as well as the former minister and current candidate for the APRA General Secretariat, Agustin Mantilla Campos, yesterday admitted the urgent need to implement the formula "one militant, one vote" within the party.

They also agreed that a political group such as the one they belong to cannot be conducted with the "intermediation" of delegates that supposedly represent the militants.

They also agreed that the APRA cannot be run by orders from abroad, clearly referring to the way the party is run by former President Alan Garcia from his self-inflicted exile in Colombia.

These agreements, however, were only reached in theory, because the mentioned leaders, during an interview granted to a television program, expressed their open and deep-rooted disagreements over the way this organization is conducted internally.

Salinas and Cabanillas insisted on criticizing the way in which the commission in charge of organizing the 19th APRA Congress is functioning.

Salinas asserted that his party lacks the support of the public, and said that a concrete step to show, in deed, that there is a desire for a clear process would be to have the intermediation system replaced by a direct, secret, and universal voting system for the militants.

Cabanillas, in turn, said that the "intermediation" system, by which the partisans are represented by delegates at the congresses, is a phase that should end with a mechanism to elect the party authorities, and especially the candidate to the presidency of the Republic.

Mantilla, after voicing "pride" over his friendship with Alan Garcia, said he agreed with that theory and with the "democratic concerns" expressed by the two former senators, but recalled that the proposal failed in 1991 when it was proposed by Luis Alva Castro.

Government Position on Population Examined

PY2807000094 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 17 Jul 94 p A39

[Commentary by Carmen Rosa Balbi on the Peruvian Government's position at the upcoming UN International Conference on Population and Development, ICPD, to be held in Cairo, Egypt, 5-13 September: "Peru's Position in Cairo"]

[Text] For some inexplicable reason, Peru's discussion of development and population policy for the upcoming UN Conference on Population to be held in Cairo has been reduced to the issue of abortion.

In this case important issues such as population, development and the environment, the extent and impact of poverty in developing countries, issues pertaining to reproductive health, gender discrimination, and migration problems (issues about which successive UN documents have proposed a series of specific joint actions for their solution), have been completely ignored.

Peru's position on the UN preparatory conference (included in the Andean Declaration issued in December 1994 which upholds the need for governments to pay attention to the dramatic problem of abortion and its consequences in countries such as ours) has irritated the most conservative sectors of the Church. They have

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interpreted it as a pro-abortion position, and since then they have undertaken a veiled disinformation campaign.

For those who want to open their eyes, it is quite obvious that the declaration issued by the UN preparatory conference does not adopt a pro-abortionist stance at any point. I believe that no one in his right mind who is aware of the traumatic effects abortion has on women will ever promote it as a family planning method.

The real issues under discussion are how to implement birth control regulations in Peru; the need to promote diverse and reliable family planning methods; and the possibility of allowing truly responsible parenthood. What is really at stake is people's right to freely and conscientiously choose what they consider to be the best and most suitable birth control method.

It is on this issue that the most conservative sectors of the Church have for weeks tried in vain to pressure Peru to not support the family planning policy upheld in the UN document, which calls for properly informing people about the options and advantages of existing modern birth control methods. As these conservative Church sectors have explicitly stated, they seek to impose on the people the so-called "natural" method as the only birth control method, which, as everyone knows, is the only method accepted by the Pope in spite of the spread of AIDS and the fact that it is an unreliable method.

This curious position has currently become a crusade. Perhaps few are aware that the Law on Population Policy (DL 346) [Decree Law 346] has been in force in Peru since 1985, when it was approved by a multiparty congress. This law encompasses an overall view of the issue, and upholds the constitutional principle of giving couples the freedom to chose how many children they desire. They are also entitled to have access to information and adequate services to exercise responsible parenthood—that is, family planning services, among others. These services have been carried out since then by both the Health Ministry, in conjunction with the National Family Planning Program, and the Education Ministry.

All these programs have been enforced in conjunction with programs aimed at improving the status of women and mother-and-child health care.

It could not be otherwise in a country in which, according to statistics that few mention in this discussion, 78 percent of the women state that they do not want to have more children; or in a country in which, according to the latest ENDES II [expansion unknown] poll, the ideal household has two children. Undoubtedly, this is where we should begin to look for a reason for the high incidence of abortion in Peru over the last few years.

These trends are a result of the harsh economic crisis endured by the people for many years and the poverty affecting low income sectors.

What we are witnessing, therefore, is insufficient coverage of government-sponsored family planning programs in low income sectors. Moreover, the education level of women plays an important role in these programs in their ability to gain access to information: Statistics prove that the higher the educational level, the fewer the number of children.

It is within this context that Peru's position on reproduction and family planning at UN-sponsored events on the matter have merely reasserted what has been implemented in the country for many years.

Dr. Victor Camacho, president of the Preparatory High Level Commission of the ICPD, reasserted all this a few days ago at the Third National Population Conference in Arequipa—where, we must add, intolerant fanaticism reached unbelievable proportions.

It is surprising, therefore, how obscurantist dogmas, in addition to their aim to completely conceal one of the most terrible dramas affecting the most impoverished sectors of the country, such as abortion, are able to distort, misconstrue, and misunderstand a crucial and indispensable issue within the framework of the upcoming UN conference: in this particular case, the interrelation between population and development policies in view of our complex geographic, regional, and cultural situation. We can only wonder: What are they after? Do they want the government to cease promoting the family planning and sexual education programs, which despite limited resources have been increasingly implemented among groups which because of limited economic resources cannot otherwise have access to them?

We can only assert in some perplexity that the secularization of our society, the separation of government and church as is established in the Constitution, is a tortuous path, to say the least. This is because it is obvious that access to these services is restricted to the upper and middle classes, which can afford safe abortions.

We believe it to be our ethical duty to disclose that which because of the polarized positions is preventing us from reasoning: In view of the situation, which is quite obvious although we may not like it, it is necessary that we adopt immediate actions to combat what today constitutes the second greatest cause of maternal mortality, as the bulk of pertinent studies show that women frequently resort to clandestine abortions.

It is indispensable that we try to avoid this harsh and nefarious reality. In view of this, today more than ever, Peru cannot yield to inadmissible pressures. This is the objective of these lines, which call for loyalty and solidarity with the drama experienced by a majority of our population.

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Ecuadoran Reports of Maritime Nuclear Contamination Denied

PY2707220494 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 19 Jul 94 p A1

[Text] Executives of the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy (IPEN) yesterday denied that samples taken of Peruvian sea water have revealed contamination from radioactive elements, as revealed in press reports from Quito.

The reports stated that radioactive Cesium-137 atoms had been detected in Ecuadoran, Peruvian, and Chilean sea waters as a consequence of the French nuclear tests on the Mururoa atoll some years ago.

Captain Luis Gamarra Elias, retired, IPEN president, pointed out that as a result of an agreement reached last year with the Ocean Institute of Peru (Imarpe), a periodic sampling of sea waters, sediments, and species is carried out to prevent that kind of contamination.

He said that the latest tests had been carried out in May with sea water samples taken from central Peru, and that the presence of polluting elements with an origin in nuclear explosions had not been detected.

He stated, however, that it has been decided with Imarpe—as was reported by EL COMERCIO yesterday—that the ship SNP-1, which is sailing from Paita to El Callao, will take new samples of water and species in order to be able to present an exact and updated test.

The IPEN director estimated that the results of the tests will be ready a week after the ship arrives. It is scheduled to arrive on 31 July.

On the other hand, IPEN Executive Director Conrado Seminario Arce recalled that the reports from Quito spoke of "preliminary tests" carried out by the Atomic Energy Commission and the scientific research ship Orion, which belongs to the Ecuadoran Navy, and that the conclusions of these tests need to be more precise.

Arce added that Ecuador could not have taken samples from Peruvian territorial waters, which are not under its jurisdiction. Therefore any mention of Peruvian waters in the reports would be a mere reference.

IPEN authorities made these comments during a news conference at IPEN headquarters in San Borja.

Habeas Data Law Discussed

94SM0414A Lima PERUPAZ in Spanish May 94 pp 8-9

[Article by Juan F. Jimenez Mayor: "Habeas Data: Against All Odds"]

[Text] "The licentiousness of reporters will be restrained by Habeas Data." Alberto Fujimori, president of the republic.

Against the unanimous opposition of intellectual sectors and of important sectors of the country's juridical thought, the law of Habeas Data was constitutionally consecrated. It is really a paradox that a discussion is going on over whether or not a constitutional guarantee is needed, the purpose of which is to watch over and protect the supremacy of the constitution and respect for human rights; nevertheless, the debate over this institution has centered not on its juridical nature, as it is understood in doctrine and in comparative law, but in the deformed way in which it was added to the Constitution of 1993, confusing it with the right of reply or with the guarantee of the right of privacy of information to the media.

The problem is obvious, given the fact that this new constitutional guarantee in comparative juridical systems works expressly to protect the privacy of personal data in computer systems. On the other hand, in our country this guarantee has broadened, this change being considered a contribution to the system, something like a heroic creation worthy of imitation.

What is Habeas Data?

Habeas Data is a constitutional guarantee that seeks to protect the right of privacy and honor. As a guarantee, it is a constitutional procedure whose objective is defense of the constitution. We can summarize its parameters of operation in the following terms:

a. To discover information, data or records about a person that are in a data bank or file open to the public, with the possibility of dissemination. This is the classic nature of the institution as it arose in advanced judicial systems, such as Germany and England.

b. To update or rectify incorrect information in files for public dissemination.

c. To exclude or eliminate data referring to a person in a defective public record.

The purpose is to prevent the arbitrary and improper use of personal information by official or private persons who have access to computer services. In truth, the problem arises in those countries where these systems are highly advanced and their use very widespread. Habeas Date addresses a real problem that affects specific rights, and as such it is already a procedural institution consecrated in law and jurisprudence.

Germany was one of the first countries to adopt Habeas Data, by means of a statute passed in 1977, incorporating important features such as the creation of a Federal Commission for the Protection of Data, an organization designed by the Bundestag (Parliament), charged with the protection of citizens' rights in information systems. The institution of Habeas Data has recently enriched comparative law with a new Law for the Protection of Data in 1991, which improves the original 1977 statute.

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In England, the institution of Habeas Data also underwent important development with the Law for the Protection of Data of 1985, which also created a specialized organization for the supervision of computer systems: the Secretariat of Registry for the Protection of Data, with important powers of administrative supervision and sanction.

The institution was adopted for the first time in Latin America by Brazil, and from there it travelled to other countries in the region, such as Colombia (1991), Paraguay (1992) and now Peru. Its embodiment in constitutions is as recent as the institution is new in the world.

Habeas Data in Peru

Since the end of the 1980's, several well-known voices in our country have been explaining what Habeas Data is in comparative law. It was not at all an unknown institution for some jurists. Therefore, when its inclusion was proposed during the recent constitutional convention, there was no opposition, as it was an accepted guarantee that strengthened mechanisms for the protection of citizens, creating a special procedure. However, very few members of Congress knew the institution of Habeas Data well. On the contrary, inside the CCD [Democratic Constituent Congress] there was great ignorance on the subject.(1) The name raised no doubts, nor did the fact of incorporating it as a specific constitutional guarantee. As a result, it easily passed the constitutional process. The difficulty would come from the content that would be given to it, a different and unique meaning compared with the way it works in other countries.

The current constitution, in article 200, clause 3, conceives of Habeas Data as a constitutional guarantee, whose purpose is to establish procedural mechanisms against acts or omissions that harm or threaten the following rights:

a. That of obtaining the information required, without explaining the reason and at the cost of fulfilling the request.

b. That of preventing the release of information, whether or not from computerized data systems, that affect personal or family privacy, such as voices and images.

c. That of honor, good reputation, and personal and family privacy affected by erroneous information or injured by the communications media, having in that case the right to free, immediate, and proportional rectification.

In truth, it is this last point that has provoked the entire debate, joining Habeas Data to the right of rectification, thus establishing a threat to freedom of the press, which is also protected by the constitution. The matter is as clear as day, in our country Habeas Data will work in practice, and massively, against the communications media, because in Peru computer data systems are not yet in broad use. In addition, and this is the most serious part, Habeas Data can be used to exercise prior censorship against the press, because action can also be taken when the right that is being protected is threatened.

This is the reason for the unanimous concern of the press, which has already been justified by the presentation of several specific actions invoking Habeas Data in the courts. This is a real and specific threat.

Congress has become involved in the scenario, and specialists have spoken of the need to amend Habeas Data constitutionally. Some even postulate its repeal. We think that Habeas Data is an important contribution to our legal system, and therefore we believe that its elimination would be extreme. We agree, rather, with those who propose its legislative modification, which means in the final analysis to harmonize Habeas Data with the constitutional principles of freedom of information and expression, for the purpose of affirming their constitutional supremacy.

This last point is important, as the constitutional conflict represented by the confrontation of two fundamental rights—that of privacy versus freedom of information and of the press—represents a conflict of values of our political system that must be defined and definitively decided, on the legislative as well as on the judicial level.

Therefore, it is necessary to reflect upon the fundamental principles of social and political coexistence. We believe that, faced with this conflict, we must make a choice, and this must be for freedom of information and of the press, for an essential reason: freedom of information and of the press are cosubstantial with the democratic system of the constitutional state, and injury to it would cause serious disruption to the system. This principle must be preserved and one of the ways this can be done is to authorize maximum guarantees so that this principle may prevail over the others. The Constitution of 1993 contains this guarantee and it is only necessary to agree on these principles to resolve the conflict.

These are the reasons for the entire debate and because of which the CCD has approved a proposal designed to regulate partially Habeas Data, almost as an emergency and without observing the requirements for an organic law, as is necessary for a constitutional guarantee. The solution adopted so far is wrong, and we cannot speak of emergencies in a country in which what is temporary becomes permanent, and where judicial criteria can bring unpleasant surprises when the protection of democratic principles is involved. The organic law must be passed that will regulate this constitutional procedure and define the powers of Habeas Data so that does no harm to the guiding principles of democracy in Peru. Let us see what our new political class will do.

Footnote

1. Dr. Carlos Torres y Torres Lara, president of the Constitutional Commission of the Constituent Congress,

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offers an interesting view of this version in an article published in the DIARIO OFICIAL EL PERUANO

Leftist Leader on 'Rethinking' Positions

94SM0413A Lima PERUPAZ in Spanish May 94 pp 14-15, 26

[Interview with Gustavo Mohme Llona, publisher of the daily LA REPUBLICA, by Alberto Otarola Penaranda: "Only Through Unanimity Can We Bring Down the Dictatorship;" date and place not given]

[Excerpts] With the presidential election one year away, PERUPAZ is initiating the electoral debate with a controversial interview. Engineer Gustavo Mohme Llona is one of the most active leaders in the forces opposing the regime of President Fujimori. He is a member of various committees engaged in political struggle, as well as the board of directors of LA REPUBLICA, one of the most influential daily newspapers in the country. The following are the statements he made, which are certain to cause more than one political wound. [passage omitted]

[Otarola] Let us turn to the subject of the election. Don't you think that there are many possible paths for the future?

[Mohme] This seems to me to be a crucial year. On a personal level, and I admit it, my life is filled with tension and uncertainty. I believe that this is the crucial moment for those of us in Peru who are trying to develop a democratic society. We face many problems that affect our daily lives but are hard to explain. We are all being persecuted by the Intelligence Service. Our telephones are being tapped and our mail is monitored. All of our daily activities have been infiltrated. A short time ago, we had to remove from my office one of eight individuals present at a meeting there. He was a SIN [National Intelligence Service] agent. This is terrible. This is a world that reminds us of the Europe of Hitler and Mussolini. Because of all of these circumstances, then, the electoral battle will be a very difficult one. In addition, we are faced with a candidate, Engineer Fujimori, who has control of a number of the elements of power—the Army, the executive branch, the budget, the oligarchic elite of the business sector—in a word, a whole complex of factors that will make any political campaign an extremely unequal struggle. Faced with such circumstances, the only thing left is to deal with it, using the best men and the best weapons with which democracy can provide us.

[Otarola] Let us take one thing at a time. The Working Group of the Left, which is seeking reunification, and of which you are a member—isn't that a rather romantic project? We do not believe that you are a utopian socialist or a thoughtless politician.

[Mohme] I believe that the left wing in Peru is in the midst of a process of analysis and that it is rethinking its ideological positions. It is moving toward a phase in which the concrete reality will prevail over exemplary goals. Within the leftist Group, for example, I have observed a discussion about what is democratic. If this discussion is given priority and is taken up by all of the forces of the left wing, we will then be much closer to a criterion for choosing a single candidate. I think that maturity is developing in this connection, and that even the Marxist-Leninist parties are adhering to the thesis that the ideological debate should be postponed until a later stage.

[Otarola] A recent Patria Roja [Red Fatherland] document seems out of alignment with what you say. It proclaimed as a tactical slogan the need "to blaze a new path for the building of a new and popular fatherland." Do you think it is possible to discuss democracy with people who have not yet abandoned Maoism?

[Mohme] There are always two lines of discourse within leftist parties—one addressed to the members and one that has to do with the tasks of each respective party. In the Marxist-Leninist movements, there is always this competition to win the members over to the ideology. I see the phraseology used as being addressed to the membership. It is a modus vivendi. What is of interest in each case is the contact established with outside forces, the relationship with the other political forces that make up the overall social fabric. This relationship, from the point of view of the left wing, must end with the winning of national power. Within the leftist Group, however, we have reached a decision. If a joint formula is found, it must necessarily be by consensus. If this effort fails, we will not be able, obviously, to think in terms of unity of the left.

[Otarola] There are also other levels on which an effort is being made—the Committee for Democracy, and the coordinating body of the democratic socialists. You are a participant in these bodies. What prospects do you foresee for them?

[Mohme] The democratic socialists council has provided a very interesting experience, one that has been developing since the time of the Socialist Forums three years ago. Then came the Socialist Confluence, and later the organization of the MDI [Democratic Left Movement], and finally, now, a democratic socialist board group is at work. What is being sought is to reconcile those plans that make of socialism and democracy their principal banner. I think that the space involved here is vast and truly national. Because of their sociological situation, the majority of the citizens of Peru share the postulates of the left wing, and therefore specific concepts such as solidarity and collective well-being are not alien to them. The goal is to find the proper language and to develop a capacity for relating to the people, and this is the task in which we democratic socialists are engaged. But this is not the only work being done, for there are other levels, such as the Committee for Democracy and the Democratic Forum, which will contribute to bringing democracy back to Peru.

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[Otarola] A crucial factor in this dynamic process is the probable candidacy of Ambassador Javier Perez de Cuellar. What do you think his chances are?

[Mohme] We are aware that in a world oriented toward a single pole, where there has been excessive encouragement of a neoliberal model, which causes damage to the lower levels of the economic sector and globalizes trade relations, it is particularly difficult to hoist other banners. We cannot deny the reality. In Peru, as well, this scheme has made great strides, and the economy is being organized on the basis of these criteria. However, it is clear to all of us that because of this cruel model imposed by the Monetary Fund, a call for social justice must be sounded. There must be a transformation to a welfare economy, one that provides social support and puts and end to the aggression against the poor. I perceive Peru as an island on which the IMF [International Monetary Fund] is carrying out a long-term experiment. There is a desire to speed up the process, so that when conditions change, it will have become irreversible. The Peruvian Church itself has just published a very harsh document describing the situation of extreme poverty. But the interested parties—Fujimori, the Army, and the oligarchic elite of the business sector who are sucking the blood of the country—do not perceive these inequalities.

[Otarola] What role would fall to Ambassador de Cuellar, then?

[Mohme] I believe that Ambassador Perez de Cuellar is, by his very nature and based on what he has said—the little he has explained about his political ideas—a man who could reestablish full and representative democracy in the country. Secondly, I believe that he could direct the liberal economy toward collective well-being and could moderate the excesses and exaggerations that have done so much harm to the country. Thirdly, I believe that Perez de Cuellar could promote a broad plan for the creation and development of jobs, and he could cut short the speculative purchasing of the country's assets. In short, I believe that he could move this whole process in the direction of a more collective benefit, toward fairer redistribution. I also understand that he has some criticisms of the 1993 Constitution, and that he would sponsor an overall revision of it. At least 52 percent of those of us citizens of Peru who voted "no" in the referendum would be in agreement.

[Otarola] Some leaders, however, have expressed reservations and fears, because there is still no outline of a government plan.

[Mohme] The fact is that there has not yet been any political dialogue with Perez de Cuellar. I have personally had two meetings with him, and my impression of him is of a consummate democrat. But beyond that, nothing specific as yet. I presume that political dialogue as such could begin when he returns to the country in June or July and has an opportunity to hear about our ideas. I believe that this is a matter of confidence. There can be no written agreement here. In 1990, very foolishly, the APRA [American Popular Revolutionary Alliance] and the left wing cast their votes for Engineer Fujimori without having had any political dialogue with the candidate at all. We wrote a blank check but did not even hand it over to an individual—we tossed it in the air.

[Otarola] One final question. Would you be prepared to play a specific government role in 1995? Because the left wing has always had an easier time on the opposition side....

[Mohme] Sincerely, I would not be afraid of such a possibility, but I see it as rather unlikely, because I am rather politically tainted individual. And it is likely that Perez de Cuellar will be quite strict when it comes to his close collaborators. And that is understandable. In addition, I believe that the question will also involve the makeup of the government team, because 3,000 or 4,000 men who think alike are needed to govern the country.

Uruguay

Government To Seek 300 Exemptions to Mercosur External Tariff

PY2807024394 Montevideo EL OBSERVADOR ECONOMICO in Spanish 20 Jul 94 p 3

[Excerpt] According to remarks made by Ernesto Soler, deputy chairman of the Chamber of Industries of Uruguay (CIU), at the International Affairs Committee, Economy and Finance Minister Ignacio de Posadas has told industrialists that Uruguay intends to obtain some 300 exemptions to the common external tariff that Mercosur [Common Market of the South] member countries are negotiating.

He furthered stated that "these exemptions will be instrumental in defending us against third countries, but not specifically against Mercosur member countries."

Soler said that according to the information provided by negotiators to industrialists, "Argentina and Brazil have offered 100 exemptions from floor to ceiling—which means that once the common external tariff becomes effective, exemptions would range from zero, which is the minimum, to the ceiling established—and 100 exemptions from ceiling to floor, i.e. ranging from levels above the common external tariff to levels at par with the said tariff."

Soler made it clear that "exemptions from floor to ceiling protect raw materials or commodities, while those from ceiling to floor mainly pertain to finished products (...); in the industrial sector it is much more important to obtain the greatest possible number of exemptions that range from floor to bottom because they enable us to defend our industry."

He noted that "Argentina and Brazil will apply exemptions—they are in fact already doing so—in certain

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sectors, such as the automotive industry, capital goods, informatics, telecommunications, etc. [passage omitted]

Congress 'Concerned' About Mercosur Negotiations

PY2707162494 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 0900 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Text] Congress is concerned about the Mercosur [Common Market of the South] negotiations.

The difficulties regarding the creation of the customs union within the Mercosur integration process are being observed with concern by Congress.

This was confirmed for El Espectador by Deputy Leon Lev, who said:

[Begin Lev recording] Congress gave the executive branch its vote of confidence regarding support for the Treaty of Asuncion, or the Mercosur Treaty, in order to implement a state policy that would take into account national interests above and beyond political forces.

But, the executive branch did not return Congress' vote of confidence in that all political forces be informed and/or consulted about every step made by the negotiators.

Regarding the topics of the duty free zones and the common external tariff, at this time the executive branch should submit all the data to Congress so that the final decision will also have the approval of the political forces and national interests will be placed above sectorial interests.

In other words, we congressmen do not receive truthful and direct information from the executive branch; we have to receive it through the media. [end recording]

Foreign Minister Abreu Departs for Brasilia

PY2707155594 Montevideo Radio Carve in Spanish 0000 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Sergio Abreu has suddenly decided to travel to Brasilia to meet with his Brazilian counterpart Celso Amorim in an attempt to iron out the existing differences between the two countries with respect to the Mercosur [Common Market of the South]. Diplomatic sources said that Abreu boarded a private light plane to travel to Brasilia and to negotiate directly with Amorim about some topics that are considered difficult in consolidating the Mercosur, a project that includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Abreu Returns From Brazil, Says Mercosur Negotiations 'Difficult'

PY2807031894 Montevideo Radio Carve in Spanish 0000 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Sergio Abreu has said that Mercosur [Common Market of the South] negotiations have become very difficult to handle at a key moment in defining the rules of the game. Abreu returned from Brasilia at noon today. In Brasilia Abreu met with his counterpart Celso Amorim. Asked by Radio Carve whether the cooling down of diplomatic relations could postpone the Mercosur schedule, Abreu said that the presidents will make a decision on the issue at their meeting in Buenos Aires on 5 August. Abreu said that he did not see any greater flexibility in the Brazilian position with respect to the tariff treatment of free trade zones located in member countries.

[Begin recording] [Abreu] Well, we cannot speak about failure or success. This is simply a continuation of the process, and Uruguay continues to maintain its clear and categorical position.

[Unidentified reporter] [words indistinct] negotiation?

[Abreu] Without a doubt. There are no easy negotiations in the area of economy and trade, particularly when you have to decide important issues such as establishing a common external tariff, that is, a common trade and tariff policy with respect to other countries. This means that Uruguay, Paraguay, and Argentina must analyze an internal strategy and project it abroad. It is not easy. There are opposing proposals. The integration of society is competitive. We are all competing for the same market, and each country has its own position beyond the political goals we are all pursuing. Uruguay has its own position, even though recognizing that it is a small country, within the integration framework. The country has enough strength to see that its political, legal, and commercial viewpoints are respected.

[Reporter] Can we talk about postponing the established deadlines?

[Abreu] So far, no. We are fully involved in negotiations. We will have a Council of Ministers meeting on 30 July, and then the president's meeting. All these topics have been discussed within the preestablished schedule. Naturally, we have a higher political level, the president's meeting, where the four countries will decide our future path of integration and which future structures will enter into effect. The presidents will also take a position on very sensitive issues and aspects that must be handled very carefully.

[Reporter] Free zone entrepreneurs are very concerned with this conflictive situation, to put it one way. They say the rules of the game have been changed.

[Abreu] No. I do not know why are they saying that the rules of the game have been changed. The country has always maintained clear and categorical positions regarding the integration process, particularly at a time of defending our free trade zones. It is also true that the Brazilian and Argentine positions—we still do not have a clear Paraguayan position—maintain that Uruguayan free trade zones should not export anything, even within the zone. [end recording]

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Tabare Vazquez' Government Program Revealed

PY2707203494 Montevideo EL OBSERVADOR ECONOMICO in Spanish 21 Jul 94 p 5

[Text] If he wins the presidential elections, Tabare Vazquez will promote "a serious revision of the schedules of the Treaty of Asuncion pertaining to the implementation of a zero tariff" within the Mercosur [Common Market of the South], and will restructure "the legal regulations to allow the lifting of bank secrecy."

The two initiatives are contained in the program of the Progressive Encounter. This alliance includes the Broad Front (FA), the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), the Socialist Option (OS) of the former members of the PGP [Party of the Government by the People], and the Independent Progressive Option of Cerro Largo Mayor Rodolfo Nin Novoa. The alliance has proclaimed Vazquez as its presidential candidate and Nin Novoa as its vice-presidential candidate.

The program, to which EL OBSERVADOR ECONOMICO had access, indicates that if Vazquez becomes head of government "he will promote dialogue between the social sectors with an eye to achieving productive and equitable agreements, but always protecting the interests of the workers and especially avoiding the lack of control that always distorts objectives that are being pursued." The program does not expressly refer to a social pact, an initiative that was launched by former President Julio Sanguinetti and Hugo Batalla—which Vazquez frontally opposed—and nor does it refer to a non-variation of the macroeconomic balance—which was substituted by the non-distortion of objectives—in order to avoid internal problems within the Armed Forces.

Regarding Mercosur, the program indicates that "Uruguay has not yet prepared itself to undertake this kind of challenge in such a way that it will obtain positive results," and recalls that "the hardest stages of the negotiations have yet to be carried out; negotiations that refer to the common external tariff, lists of exceptions, the coordination of macroeconomic policies, the institutional framework, and the eventual definition of common policies for foreign relations."

Within this context, the document stresses that "in successive negotiations it will be necessary to achieve the most important goals that will permit a transition to a more expansive economic realm with the least social cost."

"For this," it adds, "it will be necessary to undertake a revision of the schedules contained in the Treaty of Asuncion on the implementation of a zero tariff, especially regarding strategic sectors and sentient products on the lists of exception and those that require firm action regarding guarantees for countries with a relatively lower level of development."

The program indicates the financial system "must be at the service of national interests," and announces that "it will strictly control the activities of the private banking sector, especially the authenticity of assets and liabilities and the backing given to deposits, which must be guaranteed."

"Consequently," it adds, "the public banking sector (which is becoming merely a commercial banking sector) will be restructured and strengthened, seeking to adapt it to the specific needs of each of the institutions and to make it more efficient."

The program adds that "legal steps will be taken to lift bank secrecy so that the sector can be adequately controlled." It indicates that "a specific court order will be needed to lift bank secrecy."

The document adds: "The financing of public expenditures must be based on a tax system that will guarantee sufficient financing, progressively tax the contributor's capability, motivate increased production, and support the progressive distribution of income and national wealth while discouraging luxurious consumerism and speculation, thus ensuring the achievement of defined economic objectives."

The program indicates: "Value Added Tax must be reduced and must cease to be the basis of our tax system," adding that "new taxes will be incorporated. These will include personal income tax and a tax on inheritances, while existing taxes like the tax on personal assets will be reformulated."

To achieve these goals, the program outlines "strategies such as the reduction and progression of rates and taxes on some financial activities of a speculative nature, luxury goods, and on the concentration of wealth."

One chapter of the program deals with decentralization. It indicates that "an overall decentralization and deconcentration process will be promoted" to "counter the tendency of political, economic, and administrative predominance." Decentralization was one of the topics that permitted a rapprochement between Vazquez and Nin Novoa.

Regarding defense, the document stresses that "the state must determine the national defense policy in which the Armed Forces—a professional corps that is effectively subordinated to civilian power—will be used for the military defense of the nation."

Venezuela

Radical Cause Party Announces Withdrawal From Congress

PA2907011794 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Report by Cecilia Cayonne; from the "Union Radio News" newscast]

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[Text] The Radical Cause Party parliamentarian bloc has officially announced its withdrawal from Congress. Reporter Cecilia Cayonne has the story:

[Begin recording] [Cayonne] According to information provided by the chief of the Radical Cause Party parliamentarian bloc, Deputy Pablo Medina, the withdrawal is subject to approval or disapproval in order to summon a constituent assembly.

[Medina] [Words indistinct] to the president [words indistinct] a group of parliamentarians [words indistinct] is very dangerous, because it creates greater political instability. Should President Rafael Caldera win the referendum and should Congress lose, we would be able to say who will replace Congress.

[Words indistinct] the president, and this situation would lead to a presidential or bankers dictatorship, because the president has three bankers as cabinet members. Second, should Congress win the referendum and should the president lose, we would be creating the appropriate climate for a military dictatorship.

We believe this situation is very dangerous, because it creates a power vacuum; this is why we believe we had better hold a referendum, which will include the question of [words indistinct] Congress and the summoning of a constituent assembly.

We are informing the country we are temporarily withdrawing on 2 August. Whether this withdrawal is definite will depend on whether the president of the Republic indeed proposes the impeachment referendum or the constituent assembly. Should he make this proposal, our withdrawal will be permanent to ensure we all will work on the constituent assembly, which is the only political, democratic, peaceful, and constitutional way out.

[Cayonne] Medina also reported congressmen of the Radical Cause Party will work only in case of an emergency; that is, they will attend only those sessions in which issues they proposed or endorsed are discussed, issues such as the draft on the refinancing of small- and medium-size industries. He also added the congressmen will not cash their paychecks, because they will be donated to charitable organizations. [end recording]

Deputies React

PA2907021894 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Report by Cecilia Cayonne; from the "Union Radio News" newscast]

[Text] Although the Radical Cause Party's withdrawal will not affect Congress, it will affect the balance of power, as is indicated following a poll was taken among the remaining parliamentary blocs. For some, such as Deputy Pedro Tabata Guzman, head of the parliamentary bloc Democratic Action [AD], the Radical Cause Party's decision simply pleases him:

[Begin Tabata recording] I am very pleased with the news. I am happy and only ask God for this withdrawal to take place. This country now needs peace and calm, and we say we can find [words indistinct] of a dialogue backed by the president. We are willing to approve the necessary laws to bring us closer to wellbeing, to the reestablishment of a normal situation in the country, and the Radical Cause Party is, undoubtedly, a perturbing factor. [end recording]

Nevertheless, as far as Deputy Ramon Guillermo Aveledo, head of COPEI [Social Christian Party], is concerned, the Radical Cause Party's withdrawal is not good:

[Begin Aveledo recording, in progress] ....to express in Congress the opinion of voters who think as they think. The Radical Cause Party leaves these voters without representation by withdrawing; this is why I do not agree. Whether Congress works does not depend at all on the president. The president's proposal for a motion on the return to chambers of senators or deputies, who have a duty to citizens who voted for them, is absolutely absurd. [end recording]

This view is shared by Deputy Segundo Melendez, head of the Orange Bloc [Movement Toward Socialism]:

[Begin Melendez recording] the Radical Cause Party's withdrawal from Congress at this time is, undoubtedly, in line with my way of thinking—regrettable. The responsible thing to do is to work toward resolving the country's crisis. [end recording]

As far as the National Convergence is concerned, the Radical Cause Party is simply seeking political impact, as Deputy (Indelburgo Becerra) says:

[Begin Becerra recording] We believe after the Radical Cause Party realized the political mistake it made by aligning itself with COPEI and AD on the issue of constitutional restitution guarantee, they also realized they had gone against the peoples' sentiment. Their political departure is intended to justify their actions before the Venezuelan people, because they could not and will never be able to justify their behavior in the chamber. [end recoding]

It is worth mentioning that even though all those who were interviewed agreed Congress' work will not be affected by this decision, the internal balance of power will vary, because now AD and COPEI can represent a two-thirds majority in parliament at any given moment, an amount which is needed to vote on important issues.

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Government Conditions Support of Invasion of Haiti

PA2907010594 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1925 GMT 28 Jul 94

[Text] Caracas, 28 Jul (NOTIMEX)—The Venezuelan Government stated today it will only support a possible military invasion of Haiti if deposed President Jean-Bertrand requests it.

A Foreign Ministry communique stated that President Rafael Caldera's government has demanded respect for the principle of nonintervention and opposes a unilateral use of force in Haiti.

"Venezuela cannot support unilateral or multilateral military actions in any hemispheric country" but maintains its commitment to restore democracy in Haiti, the communique states.

"Should the legitimate Haitian Government request a military intervention, Venezuela will not participate in a multinational armed force to restore democracy. [no closing quotation mark as received]

The Venezuelan Government stated "all venues to find a peaceful resolution to the Haitian crisis have not been exhausted."

Venezuela is part of the UN secretary general's group Friends of Haiti, which was created to find solutions that would allow the return to power of deposed President Aristide.

Due to an imminent, multilateral decision to invade Haiti to oust the coupist military leaders, the Caracas government affirmed its position in favor of a peaceful solution.

"Venezuela reiterates its willingness to contribute, after democracy is restored, to Haiti's reconstruction, as well as strengthen the economy of that Caribbean country to open new opportunities of wellbeing for its people," the Foreign Ministry communique stated.

Foreign Minister on Iranian Diplomatic Incident

PA2807194694 Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 24 Jul 94 pp 1, 12

[Interview with Venezuela Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Burelli by Carlos Croes, EL UNIVERSAL reporter; place, date not given; questions published in boldface]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Croes] What about this matter with Iran? Has this concluded?

[Burelli] This is practically concluded. This matter with Iran is a rather usual incident in the diplomatic arena. This issue was dealt with as all of these incidents are, given there is a long tradition and because the Vienna Convention gives us a broad framework for handling that type of situation.

[Croes] Is that usual, that some diplomats kidnap a family?

[Burelli] What is usual is our solution; it is the traditional treatment given to this kind of abnormality. We cannot allow an embassy, through its officials, to act as police.

[Croes] Is this an isolated case for Iran in Venezuela or has Iran purposes other than diplomatic?

[Burelli] Based on this DISIP [Direction of Intelligence and Prevention Services] could...it could uncover a branch of which we do not yet have knowledge. What has impressed me is reading that dispatch just handed to me, that I have just seen. It is dated last year and is marked confidential. But it shows that as long ago as 1993, the alert had gone out that it hadn't been given to an official, in fact one of those who just left. By coincidence this showed up here. This is our charge d'affaires over there.

[Croes] And who is this guy?

[Burelli] He is one of those expelled... It is here, the alarm having been sounded by the charge d'affaires at the time. DISIP is still investigating possible ties of some officials accredited by the embassy; we are following that lead. I cannot confirm right now that they belong to the Political Movement for the Propagation of Islam [Movimiento Politico de Propagacion del Islamismo], Iranian-style. We are keen on not interrupting relations; that is why we trust this—which is normal, that has not been used to correct the error they made—is not a special procedure, rather it is provided for in the Vienna Convention; not to interrupt relations more than what they have been interrupted. The charge d'affaires himself was the one who delivered at 1400 their time the declaration of persona non grata on Ambassador Seyyed Reza Zargarbashi.

[Croes] What was Iran's reaction?

[Burelli] It was received with courtesy. Verbally, however they were harsh. They protested, saying that this had occurred to them with other developed and developing nations, that this would cause us the same uneasiness it had caused them. But I repeat that this is not unusual. For our part, it will go no further than this.

[Croes] Is there no fear that this is something more serious, that there is an Islamic terrorist escalation, Argentine-style, the type their fundamentalist movements usually engage in?

[Burelli] We are prepared for this. The fact that the attack in Argentina coincided with the misconduct of some Iranian officials in Caracas has us working on preventing any future ties cloaked under the umbrella of the embassy's diplomatic prerogatives.

[Croes] How many officials did Venezuela expel?

[Burelli] We expelled five, and there could be two others.

[Croes] Besides the ambassador?

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[Burelli] That is, it would be six and the ambassador.

[Croes] Have they expelled anyone over there?

[Burelli] We only have one, the charge d'affaires. The ambassador was called back one week ago.

[Croes] How did the Foreign Ministry learn of this?

[Burelli] Through the UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees], who was called from the hotel—the Eurobuilding—by the kidnapped man. He told him he had been nabbed when departing the airport, put in a vehicle, handcuffed, and mistreated, and was being kept in the hotel.

[Croes] How can someone be detained under those conditions at the airport where there are so many people, so much vigilance?

[Burelli] This can happen at the airport's exit. They put him in the back of a vehicle and drove him in to Caracas.

[Croes] Who is that person? Is he so dangerous for Iran?

[Burelli] The Iranian Government's argument is that he was an agent who worked for the United States because he was an expert in antenna installation and telecommunications. Therefore he was a government enemy. They believed he used his experience and capacity to send messages abroad. This is Iran's explanation of the refugee status.

[Croes] Has this incident been surmounted?

[Burelli] It has been overcome.

[Croes] How do you consider your relations with that government?

[Burelli] Very good. These relations are based on very close cooperation with the president and a conviction that Caldera is the option Venezuela needs to recover the ethical ground it had lost. [passage omitted]

Caldera Opens Governors Convention, Comments on Autonomy

PA2807164794 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Report by Vicente Briceno from Miraflores Palace for the "Union Radio News" newscast]

[Text] On opening the first governors' convention held during his administration, President Rafael Caldera has warned that he is not about to delegate functions that correspond to the government, as set forth in the Constitution. He recalled that although governors enjoy full autonomy, they are not sovereign within each of the federal entities.

Twenty-three governors appeared this Wednesday at the Presidential Palace, where in six workshops with members of the cabinet and other authorities they discussed security, public order, social affairs, drugs, budget, decentralization, and cost of living issues. There, the president outlined the need to face together the problems the country is experiencing, which will only be accomplished through harmony and coordination between different branches of public power.

[Begin Caldera recording] The government is reponsible for overseeing the welfare of all Venezuelans; it has a duty to fulfill. I must honestly state the government is not about ready to delegate in any collective organization its responsibilities, in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the Republic. We cannot delegate these responsibilities, because it would be treason against the oath of office we took upon assuming our presidential duties. [end recording]

Referring to the decentralization, President Caldera explained that the government will fully support and cooperate with regions, but he insisted on the need to recognize the role of central government to represent the Republic throughout the national territory.

Interior Minister on Referendum, Need for Conciliation

PA2807161194 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Report by Vicente Briceno from Miraflores Palace for the "Union Radio News" newscast]

[Text] According to Interior Minister Ramon Escovar Salom, the country's basic problem right now is political. He added that the referendum as a democratic tool cannot be ruled out, because there are no impediments to holding one.

This warning was made by the interior minister, who, nevertheless, spoke for reconciliation, dialogue, and understanding as a way of seeking unity, which is what the country wants. The interior minister said that the popular consultation proposed by the president is perfectly legal and viable from the constitutional angle, and it would open great possibilities for Venezuelan democracy.

[Begin Escovar Salom recording, in progress] ...not to exhaust all mechanisms of conciliation, understanding, harmony so as to reach, above all, a national understanding. The important thing at this moment is to achieve national unity, national understanding, and the government is doing all it can in this regard. I, as interior minister, am working on this. [end recording]

Sosa Warns of Measures To Normalize Foreign Exchange Supply

PA2807161094 Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 27 Jul 94

[Report by Vicente Briceno from Miraflores Palace for the "Union Radio News" newscast]

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[Text] Finance Minister Julio Sosa Rodriguez has warned that should commercial banks continue to take a long time to process foreign currency requests, the government is ready to use Banco Latino and Banco Industrial de Venezuela as state entities to expedite these operations. The finance minister said this when consulted on the delay in obtaining dollars for those interested in importing goods.

Minister Sosa Rodriguez ruled out possible sabotage of the new system being implemented and attributed the delay to the lack of interest on the part of financial institutions. However, he reported he will hold meetings with the directors of said institutions to correct the existing deficiency. According to Sosa Rodriguez, this situation will be resolved through a resolution issued by the Foreign Exchange Administration Board.

Meanwhile, the minister reported the Finance Ministry is working on the new economic plan that will be implemented in the mid-term, adding that it will supplement the previous tax package.

[Begin recording] [Sosa] [Words indistinct] possible to cover any fiscal deficit. I think we will be able to eliminate the fiscal deficit for 1995. This will naturally put downward pressure on inflation and therefore on interest rates as well.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] or will new taxes be created?

[Sosa] No, no. Nothing that requires [words indistinct] or legislation will be created. [end recording]

Minister Sosa Rodriguez emphatically termed as serious and illegal the seizure of dollars at Maiquetia International Airport from people traveling abroad, which has already been reported to the Interior Ministry. In this regard, he said the people who purchased dollars before controls on foreign exchange were established can carry an amount greater to that assigned by the board appointed to this end.

Arias Cardenas on PAMI Work, Caldera

94SM0398A Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish (Section 1) 19 Jun 94 p 12

[Interview with former Commander Francisco Arias Cardenas by Carlos Croes in Arias Cardenas' office in Caracas; date not given]

[Excerpts] A thinning but well-distributed head of hair with graying locks at the temples, the face of a seminarian and the expression of a priest on Sunday: that is my first impression of Commander Francisco Arias Cardenas.

If I had not lived through 4 February, I would never have seen this man of my height—short stature—as one of the leaders of the coup. He describes himself as a supporter of change by peaceful means and as a militant Christian who aspires and has the background to apply "the social doctrines of the church." And there is also his ideological identification with President Caldera.

Before becoming a soldier he spent eight years in a seminary because "my mother had offered me to God before I was born," he says with simplicity during the interview I conducted with him in his office in the Children's Foundation building.

This man, who wanted all the power, who took Maracaibo strategically without firing a single shot, now occupies the few square meters of the office of the president of the PAMI [Mother-Child Food Program], a program conceived to feed children that was created by the Perez government.

He is part of a challenge in contrast to the position taken by his comrade, Hugo Chavez Frias.

"Arias Cardenas could have been a priest, but he sought the career of arms. Is this not a strange existential dichotomy?" I asked him, and he explains.

"Do not forget Camilo Torres," he tells me.

It was my intention to interview the commander on the PAMI and how he intends to run this social program, because everything has already been said concerning his former life.

He seems enthusiastic because he wants this program to succeed. "Is it true that you offered the movement to Alvarez Paz when he was surrounded in the governor's residence of Zulia State?"

"That was not how it happened. He told me that he shared my views and I answered him: 'If you share them, then come with us.'"

You do not have to check any further to realize that there is a distance between him and Chavez Frias.

"I will not answer that question. But in fact, I am here in PAMI, I am not involved with him."

"Chavez says you have ended up as Caldera's milk distributor."

"People tell me he said that," and laughs.

"But Hugo and I are very good friends. He visited me some time ago, and said to me: 'Take care of yourself. Be careful in this job.'"

There is no doubt that "I am working for the success of Dr. Caldera's government. Working for its failure would mean seeking the destruction of everything."

He discussed the difficulties he has in PAMI and says that "perhaps I have brought in about 20 new staffers."

One of these is Colonel Joel Acosta Chirinos, also an important military leader involved in 4F [4 February coup].

A PAMI commander, a soldier would say.

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[Croes] What is PAMI?

[Arias Cardenas] Both the leadership of PAMI and the people in general, who perceive it in the same way, see the program as exclusively devoted to the distribution of dairy products, giving more importance to the distribution of dairy products than to the problem of health education, which is what it was originally intended to be. This is the analysis people make of the program. In addition, there are some figures that you get when you come into the program, figures that speak of 3.4 million people registered with the program. When you try to confirm this information, you find there is no accuracy in these figures, it is a matter of using disinformation. Of course, there may well be districts where forms may have been filled out for 3.4 million or more PAMI beneficiaries during the years the program has been in operation. Now what needs to be done is to decide how this can be checked. What populations are you serving? And you have no other way of indicating this in terms of numbers because the other controls do not work. Some are very late, and they have been done almost manually and in a fairly disorderly way. So what you have to work with in order to analyze the social function that you are performing from the quantifiable and numerical point of view is the input and output of the product, the fact that every month we deliver something like (in the first three months of 1994) about 700,000 units distributed of the Lactovisoy product, which is one of the products authorized by the National Institute of Nutrition, and in addition to that, we also distribute milk, the dairy product. So there has been a real distortion of the program. The data are not indicators even from the point of view of references for quantifying the program numerically because this has not been done well. But to put it plainly, talking about the input and output of dairy products is the most accurate method we have. So when people talk about the diagnosis, I tell them it is a program with a purpose, an objective that is very important for the Venezuelan people. But in reality, from the viewpoint of development it leaves a great deal to be desired, considering the major investment of 40 billion bolivars that the state has made.

[Croes] What is PAMI's budget?

[Arias Cardenas] PAMI's budget for this year is 9.4 billion bolivars. That covers buying the dairy product, operating costs, and the program itself. [passage omitted]

[Croes] What is your concept of the PAMI program?

[Arias Cardenas] To restore the program to its true meaning, health education, to get communities involved with what the PAMI objective means, which is providing health education, starting with the pregnant mother, the child, its birth, and the child's first six months. The middlemen who are like regional overlords in the program have meant fraud for the Treasury.

[Croes] How much?

[Arias Cardenas] Well, once we have the figures I should be able to give you the amount, with everything....

[Croes] Why do you say there is fraud?

[Arias Cardenas] I say there is fraud because these people have not complied with the fundamental objectives of the PAMI, and most of the ones involved in this are middlemen. We have to make it clear that there are some who did not comply and some who did, in order to be accurate and not fall into generalizations that tend to make us see everything as bad. But those who did not comply with regulations, the middlemen who did not act properly, committed fraud by not paying the salaries due to the distributors, by withholding benefits due to those who work in the program, and as middlemen they are receiving salaries that the PAMI intends for others. In addition, they have not run the program well and they control the distributions of dairy products poorly. But fundamentally, Carlos, the fraud I am speaking of is, to give you an example, they sent me a statement in which the person listed as in charge of the PAMI office is absolutely unknown to the director of the Ministry of Health. This means that there is a *de facto* divorce between a program designed for health education, a program founded to give meaning to primary education in health, and those who are supposed to conduct the nation's health policy. This is a program which since its start should logically have had close ties with the Ministry of Health. We are generating awareness among the people and that is why I told you about the dairy product, the strategy. PAMI uses the dairy product as an inducement so that people will come to the nutritional center, but it has to be integrated as part of a community education process that will allow these people and the communities to be the ones who demand not only that the product be distributed honestly and transparently to the people who really need it, but also honesty and transparency in the operation of the nutritional center. These people should be the ones to demand that the people who work in the nutritional center run it properly and work with them.

[Croes] Is there corruption in the PAMI?

[Arias Cardenas] Well, people talk about corruption.... There is corruption at the top when contracts are signed and when the bids are awarded, but that is very hard to prove. People are constantly telling me that, but I cannot prove it, and all the things that I am telling you are based in fact. Corruption continues at lower levels as well, not only do those who administer lower levels of the program commit these abuses, these thefts, these crimes that you mentioned, but also the very people who are the program's beneficiaries do the same thing on many occasions, as they know about the foundation's inability to control data, to control the foundation. They know there is corruption on the part of some of the distributors; that is common knowledge, but we have to prove it. In addition, there are other people who are living well who register with the program, not only in the nutrition

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center in Coro, as you said, but some who register in two or three other centers, and make their rounds collecting milk, thereby depriving people who really need it of this essential product.

[Croes] Have you had the central government's cooperation with the program?

[Arias Cardenas] I think I have had substantial cooperation; so far I have been able to get their cooperation. I have had no complaints when I have decided that a particular official needed to be removed, that some official should be sent away from here; there is respect for my decisions and I think that is substantial cooperation. Now, there is a fundamental point on which I am seeking cooperation at this time, which is to rescind Instruction 20. When the program was created, it was tied to the purchase of milk products from Venezuelan powdered milk processors. The apparent reason was to favor the dairy cattle industry in Venezuela. So it is assumed that we will buy from these people, but we know how the Venezuelan dairy industry works. We are all well aware that they import milk, especially in the summer. I was talking with Dr. Pinto Cohen, president of Indulac [Dairy Industry Association]; he spoke of import figures exceeding 60 percent in the summer. If they are really importing milk we should not be buying from them. We should be able to arrange for our own imports in order to meet demand for this social program.

[Croes] How many people does PAMI have in Venezuela?

[Arias Cardenas] We have about 1,200 employees working in the program.

[Croes] How many have you hired?

[Arias Cardenas] I have not brought in more than 20 people I do not believe, Carlos Croes, in changing people and bringing in people from outside to resolve our problems. I think it is fundamentally up to us to transform the things we see, to change administrative and public management practices. [passage omitted]

[Croes] What are you going to do about the middlemen?

[Arias Cardenas] In my view, having middlemen involved in this program is not reasonable, it makes no sense.

[Croes] How many are there?

[Arias Cardenas] Throughout Venezuela, we have approximately 16 middlemen. We have just gotten rid of one of in Maturin.

[Croes] Why?

[Arias Cardenas] Well, to be specific, because he did not comply with the terms of the contract.

[Croes] What does the middleman do? Does he receive milk?

[Arias Cardenas] Well, the middleman...I will show you a contract later. It is really extremely simple, and it is a very lucrative business deal. First of all, he receives a salary of 150,000 bolivars a month, almost twice what I am paid as president of the foundation. No, almost twice...90,000 is the salary of the president of the foundation.... The middleman receives 150,000, plus payment for an office, plus payment for the expenses he may incur in providing this service; in reality, for his office and expenses he gets something like 375,000 bolivars, something along that line. Assuming that he spends about 150,000 bolivars, these gentlemen are making a profit of approximately 200,000 bolivars a month. [passage omitted]

[Croes] Have you found many cases of cheating?

[Arias Cardenas] There are obviously instances of cheating. Many such cases arise through the middlemen. There is the matter of not paying the money they are given to the distributors, of not paying the shipping charges, of not paying any of the bonuses that we pay here. These are obvious cases of cheating that need to be brought out into the public light, and there are other things that are surprising to find in the management of public funds. There is an advertising campaign costing 140 million that I have here at hand: 140 million bolivars between [as published] 25 December 1994. Such things are immediately surprising. Some four-minute advertising spots for the Caribbean Series.... Decisions made in a minute by a stroke of a pen in the office of a minister of health and administered by the PAMI. There are some really amazing things. But, Carlos, I cannot become a constant critic. Saying, well, the country has tolerated this but I am going to get rid of all of this; but I guarantee that I am going to correct these problems. [passage omitted]

[Croes] How did Arias Cardenas come to the PAMI?

[Arias Cardenas] When I got out of jail, people had an expectation that I was to going to create a great movement that would transform the country, that would make it change. My conscience is quite clear that we made a significant contribution and a sacrifice, but I have no desire to be a savior. I am well aware that we can be part of a group of many Venezuelans who are trying to change the nation. I sense that a lot of people who are around me, or saying that I am the nation's savior, have their own self-interest in being little saviors, in obtaining benefits from being around me. My concept is more of a process than of a salvation-oriented program, than of a project designed for the nation's salvation. When I am giving support, and it is clear that I am giving it to the present government, I am taking a very great risk. The failure of the government may also mean the failure of Arias Cardenas. But working for its failure when it is on the verge of the precipice would mean working for the destruction of everything. In any case, Carlos, you have to wait until later when what is possible, the most viable outcome, the closest at hand, is destruction; otherwise, it seems to me that is aiming at suicide.

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[Croes] Do you think Caldera can bring it off successfully?

[Arias Cardenas] What I think I have said quite often to Andres Caldera, to whom I speak very frequently. A great deal of audacity is needed, it is necessary to face problems, to take much more in-depth measures, to anticipate whether the outcome will be failure or success.

[Croes] Ideologically, do you believe in Caldera?

[Arias Cardenas] Well, I have the outlook of a person with a Christian, a Catholic background. In that there is perfect agreement. I spent eight years in a seminary where the preaching of the social doctrine of the church was our daily bread. [passage omitted]

[Croes] Do changes have to take place through peaceful means?

[Arias Cardenas] I have always been a faithful believer in the concept that the changes to which people commit themselves and about which they make the most profound decisions, that is, the changes which are really thought out carefully, are the ones that produce transformations.

[Croes] 4 February was not at all peaceful.

[Arias Cardenas] The system seemed closed, I said, it was closed, but in fact, no, it was not peaceful. Such absolute control by the political parties, between Democratic Action and COPEI [Social Christian Party], made for the control of an apparatus. There is a discussion in a book by a professor at the University of Los Andes which, in defense of the insurgents, it makes a comparative analysis with the parties of East Europe, those communist parties made to control power in a Stalinist style...with their nuances, with their differences, with their excuses, they were parties made for absolute dominion and for an ironhanded grip on power. There was a situation here which could not be changed in any other way because there was complicity and preparation by the same top leaders, and there was not even one military voice that would be raised to say how it should be done. No one said: Wait, this situation needs to be cleaned up in this way and in these terms. For me personally, this was quite a desperate action, but I think it was surgically precise and necessary. Now, I believe that much more profound changes must be made toward true democracy, toward decentralization, toward participation by the citizens. I believe that justice must still be depoliticized, that the Supreme Electoral Council needs to be cleaned out, I still believe the National Congress needs to be transformed into a body that will truly represent the citizens' interests. I do believe steps have been taken, that there is a sort of array of possibilities open now, but I feel that the people who think and feel this need should join together to bring about change toward this new power in Venezuela, toward this new type of country.

[Croes] You all started the coup when the elections were approaching that were going to remove Perez through peaceful means. After that moment, the country fell apart. Considering all the instability that is still affecting us, was it worthwhile?

[Arias Cardenas] You have to go back a step further than that. I believe that 27 February 1989 is an event that cannot be overlooked; we were not the ones who first begin this process...because really what we did, if we are going to discuss this particular case, is to make some of the truths about the regime and the truth about the control of the state's political leadership by the same system a little more clear. Other people began to do that, even before we did. But for us the tragic thing was a tremendous dilemma. Carlos, after the attempt to do away with the possibility of control by special interests, the abuse of state funds, and manipulation, through that form of popular protest, through this expression of the people's dissent, we found that our Armed Forces were being transformed into an element of internal repression. During the first days of February 1992, I do not know if I have copies of those orders, but they told us that we had to prepare to deal with civil disturbances and disasters. The discussions in the Army War College after what happened on 27 February 1989 were terrible. That meant changing ourselves from an Army with the full significance, this ideal significance given us by our laws, our regulations, even our Constitution, into an army of occupation of our own country. The first telegram I received said to check the possible means of access or exit to or from the University of Zulia through which students could escape in case the university was raided. To set up 10 "chevaux-de-frise" [a sort of stockade], which are used to control prisoners' camps, to devote our full attention and efforts to training platoons to contain street disturbances. Then a unit of soldiers trained for warfare in artillery, in rocket launching; we felt they were absolutely deviating from their purpose, and that the nation was losing its way. Imagine what might have happened in a 27 February situation with a dramatic utilization of the National Armed Forces. For me personally, that meant saying: Look here, we refuse to turn back. I said this on 4 February; we refused to give to our people the peace of the grave.

[Croes] The minister at that time was Ochoa Antich?

[Arias Cardenas] Yes. Those orders were sent to all the Army units, that was not a secret telegram.

[Croes] Your group was identified with Ochoa Antich?

[Arias Cardenas] Yes. Perhaps from the point of view of friendship, of a personal relationship. He is a likeable person, but in terms of his ideas, his proposals, and his professional performance, we obviously did not identify with him. We had no contact during these activities with Minister Ochoa.

[Croes] Some people later said that he was the movement's true leader.

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[Arias Cardenas] No. That was a distortion. If he had suddenly become the leader, even if we had agreed to accept that manipulation at some point, because he, of course.... He did engage in a sort of populism; he used to invite some young officers to come and talk with him.

Congressional Audit Reveals Phantom Employees

94P21013A Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 1 Jul 94 p 11 Section 1

[Excerpt] Senator Eduardo Gomez Tamayo, the president of the Congress of the Republic, has announced that sanctions will be applied to those officials who appear on the institution's payroll list but do not perform any specific job.

Reporting on the results of the preliminary report of the audit done by the Espineira, Sheldon y Asociados company, the head of the Venezuelan Congress revealed that of a payroll of 3,243 workers, only 55 percent (1,786 officials) are physically located in the various offices; that is, are in fact performing jobs. In addition, 616 officials (16 percent) are assigned to offices but are not physically present there; 13 percent (433 people) are retired; and 2 percent (49 workers) are assigned to other offices and are present there.

Gomez Tamayo explained that there are assignments that do not correspond to the payroll list, as well as absenteeism and nonfulfillment of work schedules, and there are 185 workers who work half time, in spite of the fact that this type of half shift has not been established in the Congress. He noted the absence of suitable scales and schedules of wages and salaries.

He stressed the intention of the congressional authorities to correct the irregularities revealed by the Espineira, Sheldon y Asociados audit; their report will be passed to the Bicameral Presiding Commission so that that body will make the appropriate decisions.

"In this case we will act with all the sense of responsibility and seriousness that the situation requires," the Senate president asserted, while stressing that only people who work should remain at the Congress. Thus the jobs of those who receive pay without working will be eliminated and those who completely fulfill their assigned functions and duties will receive incentives. "The country should know that the Congress is taking its own measures with great seriousness," he stated, while describing the audit results as worrisome.

In the opinion of the head of Congress, the labor policy that has prevailed in that institution up to now has not been well-defined, people have been acting in a very scattered way "and there are many chiefs." Therefore, Gomez Tamayo said, the situation will be evaluated to define functions, seeking to continue the recovery of positions. [passage omitted]

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